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THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

and

Kautsky the Renegade

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LONDON: 1929
MODERN BOOKS LIMITED

Made and Printed in Great Britain by the Utopia Press, Ltd.,
44, Worship Street, London, E.C.2.

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PREFACE.

The pamphlet, *Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, by Kautsky, which has recently been published in Vienna, offers the most palpable exhibition of that complete and most disgraceful bankruptcy of the Second International which has long been the subject of talk among all honest Socialists in all countries. In a number of States the question of the proletarian revolution is now becoming the practical question of the day, and therefore an examination of Kautsky's renegade sophisms and complete abjuration of Marxism is a matter of necessity.

It is important, first of all, to point out that the present writer has had numerous occasions since the beginning of the war to refer to Kautsky's rupture with Marxism. A number of articles published by me in the course of 1914-1916 in the *Sotsial-Demokrat* and the *Kommunist*, issued abroad, dealt with this subject. The articles were afterwards collected and published under the auspices of the Petrograd Soviet, under the title, *Against the Stream*, by G. Zinoviev and N. Lenin, Petrograd, 1918. In a pamphlet, published at Geneva in 1915, and simultaneously translated into German and French, I wrote about Kautskianism as follows:—

"Kautsky, the greatest authority of the Second International, offers an extremely typical and telling example of how a merely verbal adhesion to

Marxism has brought about, in practice, its transformation into what may be called 'Struveism' or 'Brentanism' (that is, into a Liberal bourgeois doctrine sanctioning a non-revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat, as taught, particularly, by the Russian writer Peter Struve and the German Lujo Brentano). We observe this also in the case of Plekhanov. By means of obvious sophisms the living revolutionary soul is ripped out of Marxism, in which everything is accepted except the revolutionary methods of struggle, their propaganda and preparation, and the education of the masses for that purpose. Kautsky mechanically 'reconciles' the fundamental idea of Socialist-Chauvinism, namely, the defence of one's fatherland in the present war, with a diplomatic—that is, verbal—concession to the 'left wing' in the form of abstention from voting the war credits and of a formal proclamation of one's opposition to the war. The same Kautsky who in 1909 wrote a book on the approach of the era of revolutions and on the connection between War and Revolution, and who in 1912 signed the Basel manifesto on the duty of taking revolutionary advantage of any future war, is now trying, in all sorts of ways, to justify and to 'deck out' the Chauvinist variety of 'Socialism,' and, like Plekhanov, joins the bourgeoisie in poohpoohing all idea of revolution and all steps for an immediate revolutionary struggle. . . . But the working class cannot attain its world-revolutionary object without waging a ruthless war against such apostasy, such backbonelessness, such subserviency

to opportunism, and such unparalleled theoretical vulgarisation of Marxism. Kautsky is not an accident, but a social product of the contradictions inherent in the Second International, which combined lip-loyalty to Marxism with actual submission to Opportunism." (*Socialism and the War.* By G. Zinoviev and N. Lenin, Geneva, 1915, pp. 13-14.)

Again, in my book *Imperialism as the Last Stage of Capitalism*, which was written in 1916 and published in Petrograd in 1917, I examined in detail the theoretical fallacy of all the discussions of Kautsky about Imperialism. I quoted the definition of Imperialism given by Kautsky: "Imperialism is the product of a highly developed industrial capitalism. It embodies the endeavour of every industrial capitalist nation to annex or to subject all the extensive *agrarian* (the italics are Kautsky's) areas, irrespectively of the nations by which they are peopled." I showed how utterly incorrect this definition was, and how it aimed at glossing over the most profound contradictions of Imperialism, and thus at effecting a reconciliation with Opportunism. I quoted my own definition of Imperialism, as follows: "Imperialism is Capitalism in that stage of development in which monopolies and financial capital have attained a preponderating influence, the export of capital has acquired great importance, the international trusts have begun the partition of the world, and the biggest capitalist countries have completed the division of the entire terrestrial globe among themselves." I showed in

this connection that Kautsky's criticism of Imperialism is even beyond *bourgeois* criticism.

Lastly, in August and September, 1917—that is, before the proletarian Revolution in Russia (which took place on November 7th, 1917)—I wrote a book (published in Petrograd at the beginning of 1918), *The State and Revolution*: *The Marxist Teaching on the State and the Task of the Proletariat in the Revolution*, in which I devoted a special chapter, under the title, "The Vulgarisation of Marx by the Opportunists," to Kautsky, showing that he had completely distorted the doctrines of Marx, that he had adulterated them in conformity with the demands of Opportunism, and that "he had abjured the revolution in practice while recognising it in words."

As a matter of fact, the chief theoretical mistake of Kautsky in his pamphlet on the dictatorship of the proletariat lies just in this opportunist distortion of Marx's theories of the State which were pointed out by me in my book, *The State and Revolution*.

It was necessary to make these preliminary observations in order to prove that Kautsky had been publicly charged by me with apostasy long before the Bolsheviks assumed State power, and were condemned on that account by him.

CHAPTER I.

HOW KAUTSKY TURNED MARX INTO A LIBERAL.

THE fundamental question touched upon by Kautsky in his pamphlet is the question of the essential content of the proletarian revolution, namely, the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is a question which is of the greatest importance for all countries, especially the most advanced ones, especially those which are now at war, and especially at the present moment. One may say without fear of exaggeration that this is the most important, the chief, problem of the entire class-struggle of the proletariat. Hence it is necessary to dwell upon it with particular attention.

Kautsky formulates the question in the sense that "the opposition between the two Socialist schools (that is the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks) is the opposition between two fundamentally different methods: the democratic and the dictatorial" (p. 3).

Let me point out in passing that by calling the non-Bolsheviks in Russia, that is, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, "Socialists," Kautsky has been guided by their names; that is, by the mere word, and not by the actual position which they have taken up in the fight between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. What a fine interpretation and application of Marxism! But of this

more anon. At present we must deal with the main point, with the great discovery made by Kautsky of the "fundamental opposition" between "democratic and dictatorial methods." This is the gist of the matter, and this is the essence of Kautsky's pamphlet. And this is such a monstrous theoretical confusion, such a complete renunciation of Marxism, that Kautsky may be said to have quite outstripped Bernstein.

The question of the dictatorship of the proletariat is the question of the relation between the proletarian State and the bourgeois State, between proletarian democracy and bourgeois democracy. This, it would seem, ought to be as plain as noonday. But Kautsky, like a schoolmaster who has been going over his historical text-books again and again until he has become as dry as dust, persistently turns his back to the twentieth and his face to the eighteenth century, and tediously chews, for the thousand-and-first time, in a number of paragraphs, the old and ancient cud about the relation between bourgeois democracy and absolutism and mediævalism. What a fruitful occupation in our days! What a lack of understanding of the fitness of things! One cannot help smiling at Kautsky's endeavours to represent the matter in a way as if there were persons preaching "contempt for democracy" (p. 11) and so forth. It is by such twaddle that Kautsky has to gloss over and to confuse the question at issue, for he formulates it in the manner of bourgeois Liberals, as if it were a question of democracy *in general*, and not of *bourgeois* democracy, and

even avoids using this precise class term, speaking instead of a "pre-Socialist democracy." Almost a third of his pamphlet, twenty pages out of a total of sixty-three, is devoted by this windbag to a twaddle which must be very agreeable to the bourgeoisie, as it paints bourgeois democracy in rosy colours and obscures the question of the proletarian revolution.

Still, the title of Kautsky's pamphlet is *Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. Everybody knows that this is just the essence of Marx's teaching, and Kautsky, after all this talk beside the point, is obliged to quote Marx's words on the subject. The way, however, in which he, the so-called Marxist, has done it is simply a farce. Listen: "The whole of that view" (which Kautsky dubs "contempt for democracy") "rests upon one single word of Marx." This is what Kautsky says on page 20, and on page 60 the same thing is repeated in a still more pointed form, to the effect that the Bolsheviks have "just in good time discovered a shibboleth" (the textual word is "wörtchen") about the dictatorship of the proletariat, which Marx used once in 1875 in a private letter.

This is Marx's "shibboleth": "There lies between the capitalist and communist society a period of revolutionary transformation of one into the other. This period has a corresponding political period of transition, during which the State can be nothing else than a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat."

First of all, to call this celebrated passage of

Marx, which sums up all his revolutionary teaching, "one single word," and even "shibboleth," is to insult Marxism, to abjure it completely. One must not forget that Kautsky knows Marx almost by heart, and that, to judge by all his writings, he has in his desk or in his head a number of pigeon-holes in which all that was ever written by Marx is distributed in a manner most scientific and most convenient for quotation. Kautsky cannot but know that both Marx and Engels, both in their letters and public writings, spoke *repeatedly* about the dictatorship of the proletariat, both before and after the Commune. Kautsky cannot but know that the formula "dictatorship of the proletariat" is but a more historically concrete and more scientifically precise designation for that task of the proletariat in "breaking up" the bourgeois State machine, about which Marx and Engels, in summing up the experience of the revolution of 1848, and, still more so, of 1871, spoke *for forty years*, between 1852-1891.

How is this monstrous distortion of Marxism, by such a schoolman of Marxism as Kautsky, to be explained? In terms of philosophy, this distortion is simply a substitution of eclecticism and sophistry in the place of dialectics. Kautsky is a past master in the art of such substitutions. In terms of practical politics, this distortion is simply a piece of flunkey-like subserviency to the Opportunists, that is, in the last resort, to the bourgeoisie. Advancing, since the beginning of the war, at an increasingly rapid pace, Kautsky has attained a rare virtuosity

in this art of being a Marxist in words and a lackey of the bourgeoisie in practice.

One becomes still more convinced of this when the remarkable way is examined in which Kautsky has interpreted Marx's "shibboleth" about the dictatorship of the proletariat. Listen:

"Marx unfortunately has failed to show us in greater detail how he conceived this dictatorship." (This is a thoroughly mendacious phrase of a renegade, since Marx and Engels gave us quite a number of most precise indications which our schoolman of Marxism has deliberately ignored.) "Literally, the word 'dictatorship' means the abrogation of democracy. But, of course, taken literally, this word also means the undivided rule of one individual who is not bound by any laws—an autocracy which differs from despotism only in this that it is regarded not as a permanent State institution, but as an extreme measure of a temporary character. Hence the term, 'the dictatorship of the proletariat,' referring as it does to the dictatorship not of one individual, but of a class, *ipso facto* excludes the possibility that Marx in this connection used the word 'dictatorship' in its literal sense. In fact, he speaks in this connection *not of a form of government*, but of a state of *things* which must necessarily supervene whenever and wherever the proletariat has conquered political power. That Marx did not have in view a form of government is proved by the fact that he was of the opinion that in England and America the transition can take place peacefully, and therefore, in a democratic way." (p. 20).

I quoted this disquisition in full on purpose, in order that the reader may clearly see the kind of method employed by Kautsky, the "theoretician."

Kautsky chooses to approach the question so as to begin with a definition of the word: "dictatorship." Very well. Everybody has the inalienable right to approach a subject in whatever manner he desires. One must only distinguish a businesslike and honest approach to a question from a dishonest. Anyone who wanted to be serious in approaching this question ought to have given his own definition of that "word"; then the question would have been put fairly and squarely. But Kautsky did not do that. "Literally," he writes, "the word 'dictatorship' means the abrogation of democracy."

First, this is not a definition. If it was Kautsky's design not to give a definition of the idea of dictatorship, why did he choose this particular approach to the question? Second, it is obviously untrue. It is natural for a Liberal to speak of democracy in general, but a Marxist will never fail to ask the question: for what class? Everybody, for instance, knows (and Kautsky the "historian" also knows it) that the rebellions and even the mere "unrest" of the slaves in antiquity each time revealed the essential nature of the ancient State as a *dictatorship of the slave-owners*. Did this dictatorship abrogate democracy among the slave owners *for them*? Everybody knows that it did not. Kautsky, "the Marxist," uttered a masterpiece of nonsense and untruth because he "forgot" the class-struggle.

To make a true and Marxist proposition out of the

false and liberal one given by Kautsky, it is necessary to state as follows: a dictatorship does not necessarily mean the abrogation of democracy for that class which wields it against the other class, but it necessarily means the abrogation, or at least an essential restriction (which is but one of the forms of abrogation), of democracy for that class which the dictatorship is wielded.

But however true this proposition is, it does not give us a definition of dictatorship.

Let us examine Kautsky's next sentence: "But of course, taken literally, this also means the undivided rule of one individual who is not bound by any laws." Like a blind puppy which accidentally hits with his nose now one object, then another, Kautsky has accidentally stumbled here on one true idea, namely, that dictatorship is a power which is not bound by any laws; nevertheless, he still fails to give us a definition of dictatorship, and in addition, utters an obvious historical falsehood, viz., that dictatorship means the power of one person. This is not even literally correct, since the power of dictatorship can be exercised also by a handful of persons, by an oligarchy, by one class, etc.

Kautsky further points out the difference between dictatorship and despotism, but although what he says is obviously incorrect, we shall not dwell upon it, as it is wholly irrelevant to the main subject. Everybody knows Kautsky's weakness in turning his face from the twentieth to the eighteenth century, and from the eighteenth century to classical antiquity, and I hope that the German proletariat,

having established its dictatorship, may take cognisance of this amiable habit of his and appoint him to the post of master of ancient history at some boys' secondary school. To try to evade a definition of the dictatorship of the proletariat by scholastic disquisitions on despotism is either sheer stupidity or a very clumsy trick.

As a result, we find that having undertaken to discuss the dictatorship of the proletariat, Kautsky has talked a good deal that is contrary to truth, but has given us no definition. Yet he could, without relying upon his ingenuity, have had recourse to his memory and taken out from his pigeon-holes all those instances when Marx spoke of the dictatorship. He would certainly have arrived, roughly, at the following definition: Dictatorship is an authority relying directly upon force, and not bound by any laws. The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is an authority maintained by the proletariat by means of force over and against the bourgeoisie, and not bound by any laws.

And this simple truth—plain as noon-day to every intelligent worker (representing the masses, though not their top section of scoundrels bought by the capitalists, such as the Socialist Imperialists of all countries are)—this truth, obvious to any representative of the exploited classes, struggle for their emancipation, and indisputable for every Marxist, has to be extorted almost by main force from that most learned gentleman, Mr. Kautsky. How is such a phenomenon to be explained? Simply by that spirit of flunkeyism which has permeated the

leaders of the Second International, who have become contemptible sycophants in the service of the bourgeoisie.

First Kautsky has committed a distortion of terms by proclaiming the obvious nonsense that the word dictatorship, in its literal sense, means a single person, and then, on the strength of this distortion, has declared that therefore, with Marx, his phrase about dictatorship of a class must not be taken in its literal sense (but only in that in which dictatorship does not connote revolutionary violence, but merely "the peaceful conquest of a majority in a bourgeois"—mark you—"democracy").

One must, if you please, distinguish between a "state" and a "form of government"! A most wonderful distinction, not unsimilar to that between the "state" of stupidity in the case of a man who talks silly nonsense, and the "form" of this stupidity!

Kautsky *had* to interpret dictatorship as a "state of domination" (this expression is used by him textually on page 21), since in that case revolutionary violence, or a violent revolution, disappears. A "state of domination" is a state in which any majority finds itself under a "democracy." Thanks to such a trick revolution disappears, to everybody's satisfaction. But this is too crude a trick, and will not save Kautsky. One cannot do away with the fact that a dictatorship means a "state" (very disagreeable to all renegades) of revolutionary violence of one class against another. The absurd distinction between a "state" and "form of government"

becomes patent. It is doubly and trebly stupid to speak in this connection of forms of government, since every child knows that monarchy and republic are two different forms of government. Yet Kautsky pretends not to know that these two forms of government, as well as all transitional forms of government under capitalism, are but so many varieties of the bourgeois State, that is, of the *dictatorship of the bourgeoisie*.

Lastly, to speak of forms of government is not only a stupid, but also a very crude falsification of Marx, who clearly spoke of this or other form of the *State*, and not of forms of *government*.

The proletarian revolution is impossible without the forcible destruction of the bourgeois State machine and the creation, in its place, of a new one which, in the words of Engels, "no longer is a State in the proper sense of the word." But Kautsky's position as a renegade makes it necessary for him to try and hush up; and see what kind of tricks he has to employ for this purpose.

First trick: "That Marx did not have in view in this connection any *form of government* is proved by the fact that he was of the opinion that in England and America the transition can take place peacefully, that is, in a democratic way."

A *form of governmeni* has nothing to do with the question, since there are monarchies which are not typical for the bourgeois State, as when, for instance, they have no militarism, and there are republics which are quite typical, that is, are accompanied by militarism and a bureaucracy. This is a universally

known historical and political fact, and Kautsky will not succeed in perverting it. If Kautsky had wanted to reason in an honest and business-like fashion he would have asked himself: are there historical laws of revolution which know of no exception? And the reply would have been: no, no such laws exist. These laws only refer to what is typical, to what Marx once termed "ideal," in the sense of an average, normal, characteristic capitalism.

Further, was there in the '70's of last century anything which made England and America an exception in respect of what we are considering now? Everybody familiar with the postulates of science in the domain of historical problems knows that such a question must be put, as otherwise we should falsify history as a science and should indulge in sophisms. Once this question has been put, the answer admits of no doubt: the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is violence in respect of the bourgeoisie, and the need of such violence is caused especially, as repeatedly explained by Marx and Engels in detail (particularly in *The Civil War in France* and the preface to it) by the fact that there exist an army and bureaucracy. But just these institutions in the '70's of last century, when Marx was making his observations, did not exist in England or America (though now they *do* exist).

Kautsky has had to be dishonest at every step in order to cover up his apostasy, though here he has unwittingly revealed his inner thoughts, by using

the phrase: "peacefully, that is, *in a democratic way*."

When trying to define the term "dictatorship," Kautsky employed every means to conceal from the reader the fundamental mark of this conception, namely, revolutionary *violence*. But now the murder is out: we see that the opposition is between a *peaceful* and a *forcible* revolution.

That is where the issue lies. Kautsky needed all these distortions, evasions, and sophisms, in order to "back out" from a *forcible* revolution, and to screen his repudiation of it, his desertion, bag and baggage, to the Liberal-Labour, that is, the bourgeois camp.

Kautsky, the "historian," is so shamelessly adulterating history that he forgets the fundamental fact that capitalism of the pre-monopolist era, of which the 'seventies of the last century were just the highest point, was, in virtue of its fundamental *economic* traits (which were most typical in England and America), distinguished by, comparatively speaking, greatest attachment to peace and freedom. As against this, Imperialism, that is, capitalism of the monopolist era, which has finally matured in the twentieth century, is, in virtue of its fundamental *economic* traits, distinguished by least attachment to peace and freedom, and by the greatest development of militarism everywhere. To fail to notice this in discussing the question as to the extent to which a peaceful or forcible revolution is typical or probable, is to stoop to the position of a lackey-in-ordinary to the bourgeoisie.

Second trick. The Commune of Paris was a dictatorship of the proletariat, but it was elected by universal suffrage, without depriving the bourgeoisie of the franchise, *i.e.*, "democratically." Kautsky is elated: "The dictatorship of the proletariat is, for Marx, a state which flowed necessarily from pure democracy when the proletariat forms an overwhelming majority" (p. 21).

This argument of Kautsky is so amusing that one almost suffers from an *embarras des richesses*. First, it is known that the flower of the bourgeoisie had run away from Paris to Versailles. There, at Versailles, was also the "Socialist" Louis Blanc—which circumstance, by the way, proves the baselessness of Kautsky's assertion that "all schools" of Socialism took part in the Commune. Is it not ridiculous to represent as "pure democracy," with "universal" suffrage, the division of the inhabitants of Paris into two belligerent camps, in one of which had concentrated the entire militant and politically active section of the bourgeoisie?

Second, the Commune was at war with Versailles as the workers' Government of *France* against the bourgeois Government. What a "pure democracy" and "universal" suffrage it was when Paris was deciding the fate of all France! When Marx gave his opinion that the Commune had committed a mistake in failing to seize the *Banque de France*, belonging to *entire* France, did he consider the principles and practice of "pure democracy?" Obviously, Kautsky was writing his book in a country where the people are forbidden by the police to act

or even to laugh "collectively"—else Kautsky would have been annihilated by laughter.

Third. I beg respectfully to remind Mr. Kautsky, who knows Marx and Engels by heart, of the following appreciation of the Commune by Engels from the point of view of "pure democracy":

"Have these gentry (the anti-Authoritarians) ever seen a revolution? Revolution is undoubtedly the most authoritarian thing in the world. Revolution is an act in which one section of the population imposes its will upon the other by rifles, bayonets, guns, and other such exceedingly authoritarian means. And the party which has won is necessarily compelled to maintain its rule by means of that fear which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. If the Commune of Paris had not relied upon the armed people as against the bourgeoisie, would it have maintained itself more than twenty-four hours? Are we not, on the contrary, justified in reproaching the Commune for having employed this authority too little?"

Here you have your "pure" democracy!" What vials of ridicule would Engels have poured upon the head of that vulgar petty bourgeois, the "Social-Democrat" (in the French sense of the 'forties of last century, and in the European sense of 1914-18), who would have talked about "pure democracy" in relation to a society divided into classes!

But enough. It is impossible to enumerate all the absurdities uttered by Kautsky, since every phrase in his mouth represents a bottomless pit of apostasy.

Marx and Engels have analysed in a most detailed

manner the Commune of Paris, showing that its merit consisted in the attempt to *break*, to *smash up*, the existing State machine. Marx and Engels considered this point to be of such importance that they introduced it in 1872, as the only amendment, into the partly "obsolete" programme of the *Communist Manifesto*. Marx and Engels showed that the Commune was abolishing the army and the bureaucracy, was destroying *parliamentarism*, was cutting out "that parasitical incubus, the State," and so forth; but the all-wise Kautsky, having put his head into his night-cap, repeats the fairy-tale about a "pure democracy," which has been told thousands of times by Liberal professors. Not unjustly did Rosa Luxembourg declare on Aug. 4, 1914, that German Social-Democracy was now a *whited sepulchre*.

Third trick: "When we speak of the dictatorship as a form of government we cannot speak of the dictatorship of a class, since a class, as we have already pointed out, can only dominate, but not govern." It is, forsooth, organisations or parties which govern!

You are talking nonsense, sheer nonsense, Mr. Muddle-Head. Dictatorship is not a "form of government." This is ridiculous nonsense. And Marx himself speaks not of a form of *government*, but of a form or type of *State*. This is altogether a different thing. Nor is it in any way true to say that a class cannot govern. Such an absurdity can only be uttered by a parliamentary *crétin* who sees nothing but bourgeois parliaments and government

Parties. Any European country will show Kautsky instances of government by a ruling *class*, as for instance, by the land-owners in the Middle Ages, in spite of their insufficient organisation.

The sum-total is that Kautsky has distorted in a most unprecedented manner the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat by turning Marx into a humdrum Liberal, and that he himself has rolled down to the level of a Liberal who talks banalities about "pure democracy," disguises under attractive veils the class character of *bourgeois* democracy, and, above all, is mortally afraid of *revolutionary violence* on the part of the oppressed class. By Kautsky's interpretation of the idea of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, calculated to banish all revolutionary violence on the part of the oppressed class against the oppressors, the world record in the Liberal distortion of Marx has been beaten, and the renegade Bernstein has been proved to be a mere puppy in comparison with the renegade Kautsky.

CHAPTER II.

BOURGEOIS AND PROLETARIAN DEMOCRACY.

THE question so unscrupulously distorted by Kautsky is in reality as follows: It is obvious, if we are not to indulge in mockery over commonsense and history, that one cannot speak of "pure democracy" so long as different classes exist. One can only speak of *class* democracy. (One may remark in passing that "pure democracy" is not only an ignorant phrase showing lack of understanding both of the struggle of classes and of the nature of the State, but also a hollow phrase, since in Communist society democracy will gradually become a habit and finally *wither away*, but never will be "pure democracy.") In fact, "pure democracy" is the mendacious phrase of a Liberal who wants to dupe the working class. History only knows a bourgeois democracy which replaces feudalism, and a proletarian democracy which replaces bourgeois democracy. When Kautsky devotes scores of pages to the proof of the fact that bourgeois democracy is a progressive order in comparison with the mediæval one, and must be made use of by the proletariat in its struggle against the bourgeoisie, he is just indulging in the usual Liberal twaddle which has for its object to gull the workers. For it is a bare truism, not only in

educated Germany, but also in uneducated Russia. Kautsky is simply throwing "learned" dust into the eyes of the workers when he tells them with an air of importance about Weitling and the Jesuits of Paraguay and many other things, in order to hide from their sight the *bourgeois* essence of modern, that is, *capitalist*, democracy.

Kautsky takes from Marxism only what is acceptable to Liberals, to the bourgeoisie (viz., the criticism of the Middle Ages, and the progressive historical part played by capitalism in general, and capitalist democracy in particular) and eliminates, suppresses, hushes up in Marxism all that is unacceptable to the bourgeoisie (such as the importance of the revolutionary violence of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie with a view to its destruction). That is why Kautsky, in virtue of his objective attitude and in spite of his subjective inclinations, becomes the lackey of the bourgeoisie.

Bourgeois democracy, while constituting a great historical advance in comparison with feudalism, nevertheless remains, and cannot but remain, a very limited, a very hypocritical institution, a paradise for the rich and a trap and a delusion for the exploited and for the poor. It is this simple truth, which forms the essential part of Marx's doctrines, that Kautsky, "the Marxist," has failed to understand. On this fundamental question Kautsky gives us only what is agreeable to the bourgeoisie, and does not give us any scientific criticism of those conditions which make every bourgeois democracy only a democracy for the rich.

Let us recall to the learned mind of Mr. Kautsky the theoretical propositions of Marx and Engels, which our schoolman has so disgracefully "forgotten" (in order to please the bourgeoisie), and then we shall explain the question more popularly. Not only the ancient and feudal, but also the "representative State of to-day is an instrument of exploitation of wage-labour by capital" (Engels, in his book on the State). "Since the State is only a temporary institution which is to be made use of in revolution in order forcibly to suppress the opponents, it is perfectly absurd to talk about a free popular State; so long as the proletariat still needs the State it needs it not in the interests of freedom, but in order to suppress its opponents, and when it becomes possible to speak of freedom the State, as such, ceases to exist" (Engels in his letter to Bebel, March 28th, 1875). "The State is nothing but a machine for the suppression of one class by another —this in a democratic republic no less than in a monarchy" (Engels, in his preface to Marx's *Civil War*). "Universal suffrage is an index of the maturity of the working class; it cannot, and will not, give anything more in the present State" (Engels, in his book on the State. Mr. Kautsky tediously chews at great length the first part of the proposition, which is acceptable to the bourgeoisie, but, as a renegade, conveniently omits the second half, which is not agreeable to the bourgeoisie). "The Commune was to be not a parliament, but a working body, legislating and executing at the same time. . . . Instead of decid-

ing once in three or six years what member of the ruling class was to represent and repress the people in parliament, universal suffrage was to be the means whereby the people, organised in Communes, was to seek out, for its gigantic business, workers, foremen, book-keepers, just in the same way in which employers use their individual suffrage" (Marx, in his *Civil War in France*).

Every one of these propositions, which are well known to the most learned Mr. Kautsky, is a direct challenge to him and lays bare his apostasy. Kautsky nowhere in his pamphlet shows the slightest understanding of these truths. The whole of his pamphlet is but a mockery of Marxism.

Take the fundamental laws of modern States, take their internal administration, take the right of meeting and the freedom of the press and the so-called equality of all citizens before the law, and you will see at every step evidence of the hypocrisy of bourgeois democracy, with which every honest and intelligent worker is familiar. There is not a single State, however democratic, which does not contain loopholes or limiting clauses in its constitution, which guarantee the bourgeoisie the legal possibility of dispatching troops against the workers, of proclaiming martial law, and so forth, in case of the disturbance of public order, that is, in case of the "disturbance" by the servile class of its servile condition, and of attempts to strike a non-servile attitude. Kautsky shamelessly gives attractive airs to bourgeois democracy by suppressing, for instance, such acts as are committed by the

most democratic and republican bourgeoisie of America and Switzerland against strikers.

Yes, the all-wise and most learned Kautsky hushes up these things. He does not evidently realise, this great political theoretician, that such silence is an infamy. He prefers telling the workers nursery tales, such as that democracy means the "protection of minorities." It is incredible, but it is a fact. In the year of our Lord 1918, in the fifth year of the universal Imperialist slaughter and strangulation of internationalist (that is, not such as have infamously sold Socialism, like, for instance, the Renaudels and the Longuets, the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, the Hendersons and the Webbs, etc.) minorities in all "democracies of the world," the learned Mr. Kautsky sweetly sings the praises of the "protection of minorities." Those who are interested may read this on page 15 of Kautsky's pamphlet. And on page 16 this learned personage tells you about the Whigs and Tories in England in the 18th century!

Oh, this wonderful erudition! Oh, this refined flunkeyism before the bourgeoisie! Oh, this civilised way of crawling on the belly before the capitalists and of licking their boots! If I were a Krupp or a Scheidemann, a Clemenceau, or a Renaudel, I would give Mr. Kautsky millions, would cover him with thousands of Judas kisses, would press him upon the workers, and recommend "Socialist unity" with respectable men like him. To write pamphlets against the dictatorship of the proletariat, to tell about the Whigs and Tories in England in

the 18th century, to give assurances that democracy means the "protection of minorities," and to suppress the facts about pogroms of internationalists in republican and democratic America—why, the bourgeoisie cannot get a more servile lackey!

The learned Mr. Kautsky has "forgotten"—no doubt accidentally—one little thing; namely, that the protection of minorities is extended by the ruling party in a bourgeois democracy only to the other *bourgeois* parties, while on all serious, fundamental issues, the working class gets, instead of the "protection of minorities," martial law and pogroms. *The more developed democracy is, the nearer at hand is the danger of a pogrom or civil war in connection with any profound political divergence which threatens the existence of the bourgeoisie.* This "law" of bourgeois democracy the learned Mr. Kautsky could have studied in connection with the Dreyfus affair in the republic of France, with the lynching of negroes and internationalists in the democratic republic of America, with the conflicts between Ireland and Ulster, in democratic England, with the hunting down of the Bolsheviks and the organisation of pogroms against them, in July, 1917, in the democratic republic of Russia. I have purposely chosen these examples from among the incidents not only of war, but also of pre-war time. But sweet Mr. Kautsky finds it more pleasant to shut his eyes to these facts of the twentieth century, and to tell the workers, instead, the wonderfully novel, the remarkably exciting, the extraordinary, the

instructive, and highly important facts about the Tories and Whigs of the eighteenth century!

Or take the bourgeois parliaments. Is it to be supposed that learned Mr. Kautsky has never heard of the fact that the more democracy is developed, the more do the bourgeois parliaments fall under the control of the Stock Exchange and the bankers? This, of course, does not mean that bourgeois parliamentarism ought not to be made use of; the Bolsheviks, for instance, made, perhaps, more successful use of it than any party in the world, having in 1912-14 captured the entire Labour representation in the fourth Duma. But it does mean that only a Liberal can forget the historical limitation and relativeness of bourgeois parliamentarism in the manner in which Kautsky does. At every step, even in the most democratic bourgeois States, the oppressed masses come across the crying contradiction between the *formal* equality proclaimed by the "democracy" of the capitalists, and the thousand and one *de facto* limitations and restrictions which make the proletarians wage-*slaves*. It is this contradiction which opens the eyes of the masses to the rottenness, hypocrisy, and mendacity of capitalism. It is this contradiction which the agitators and propagandists of Socialism are constantly showing up to the masses, in order to prepare them for the revolution. And when the era of revolution *has* begun, Kautsky turns his back upon it and starts to extol the charms of moribund bourgeois democracy!

Proletarian democracy, of which the Soviet régime constitutes one of the forms, has given to the

world a hitherto unknown expansion and development of democracy for the gigantic majority of the population, for the exploited and labouring masses. To have written a whole pamphlet about democracy, as Kautsky has done (who devotes two pages to the question of dictatorship and scores of pages to that of "pure democracy") and *not* to have noticed this fact, means simply that he has distorted the facts, after the approved Liberal manner.

Or take foreign policy. In no bourgeois State, not even in the most democratic one, is it carried out openly. Everywhere the masses are deceived—in democratic France, Switzerland, America, or England in an incomparably more refined and wholesale manner than in other countries. It was the Soviet Government which by a revolutionary act has torn off the veil of mystery from foreign policy. But Kautsky has not noticed this, and passes it over in silence, although in the present era of predatory wars and secret treaties about spheres of influence (that is, about the partition of the world between the capitalist bandits), the subject is one of cardinal importance, on which the happiness and the life and death of millions depend.

Or take the organisation of the State. Kautsky seizes upon all manner of petty things, including the system of "indirect" elections under the Soviet constitution, but the essence of things wholly escapes him. He does not see the *class* nature of the State machinery. By a thousand-and-one tricks the capitalists, in a bourgeois democracy—and these tricks are the more skilful and the more effective, the

further "pure" democracy has developed—keep the masses out of the administration and frustrate the freedom of the Press, the right of meeting, etc. The Soviet régime, on the contrary, is the first in the world (or strictly speaking, the second, because the Commune of Paris attempted to do the same thing) to *attract* the masses, that is, the *exploited* masses, to the work of administration. The labouring masses are kept away from bourgeois parliament (which *never* decides the most important questions in a bourgeois democracy, as they are decided by the Stock Exchange and the banks) by a thousand-and-one barriers, in consequence of which the working-class perfectly well realises that the bourgeois parliaments are institutions *foreign* to them, are an *instrument of oppression* of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie, are an institution of the hostile class, of the exploiting minority.

As against this, the Soviets are the direct organisation of the labouring and exploited masses themselves, which enables them to organise and to administer the State by their own efforts in their own manner. The urban proletariat, the advance guard of the toiling and exploited, enjoys under this arrangement a position of advantage, due to its being best organised by the large industrial concerns, which enables it best to hold elections and to control the elected. The Soviet system automatically facilitates the rally of all those who work and are exploited round their advance guard, the proletariat. The old bourgeois apparatus, the bureaucracy, the privileges of wealth, of bourgeois education, of

social connections, etc., which are the more varied, the more highly bourgeois democracy has developed —all this disappears under the Soviet system. Freedom of the Press ceases to be an hypocrisy, because the printing presses and the paper are taken away from the bourgeoisie. It is the same with the best buildings, the palaces, the villas, and the country houses. Thousands and thousands of these best buildings have been taken away from the exploiters by the Soviet authority, which has thereby made the right of meeting for the masses a thousand times more "democratic" than before, since without this right all democracy is a fraud and a delusion. The indirect elections to the non-local Soviets make it easier to arrange for congresses of the Soviets, render the entire apparatus cheaper, more elastic, more accessible to the workers and peasants at a time when life is overflowing and it is necessary to be able rapidly to recall a delegate or to send him to the General Congress of Soviets. Proletarian democracy is a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy, and the Soviet régime is a million times more democratic than the most democratic régime in a bourgeois republic.

This could only have remained unnoticed by a person who is either the deliberate henchman of the bourgeoisie or is politically dead, does not see life from behind the dusty pages of bourgeois books, is permeated through and through by bourgeois democratic prejudices, and thereby, objectively speaking, becomes the lackey of the bourgeoisie.

This could only have remained unnoticed by a

man who is incapable of putting the question from the point of view of the exploited classes: is there one single country in the world, even among the most democratic bourgeois countries, in which the ordinary rank-and-file worker, the ordinary rank-and-file village labourer or village semi-proletarian (that is, the overwhelming majority of the population), enjoys anything approaching such *liberty* of holding meetings in the best buildings, such *liberty* of giving utterance to his ideas and of protecting his interests in print by means of the best printing works and largest stocks of paper, such liberty of appointing men and women of his own class to administer and to organise the State, as in Soviet Russia.

The mere thought is absurd that Mr. Kautsky could find in any country one single worker or agricultural labourer in a thousand who, on being informed of the facts, would hesitate in replying to this question. Instinctively, through reading the bare fragments of truth in the bourgeois press, the workers of the entire world sympathise with the Soviet Republic, just because they see in it a *proletarian* democracy, a democracy *for the poor*, and not a democracy for the rich, as is the case with every bourgeois democracy, even the best. "We are ruled, and our State is run, by bourgeois bureaucrats, by capitalist parliaments, by capitalist judges"—such is the simple, indisputable, and obvious truth, which is known and felt, through their own daily experience, by tens and hundreds of millions of the exploited

classes in all bourgeois countries, including the most democratic. In Russia, on the other hand, the bureaucratic apparatus has been completely smashed up, the old judges have all been driven from their seats, the bourgeois parliament has been dispersed, and instead the workers and peasants have received a much more *popular* representation, their Soviets have replaced the bureaucrats, or are controlling them, and their Soviets have become the authorities who elect the judges. This fact alone is enough to justify all the oppressed classes in regarding the Soviet régime, that is, the Soviet form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.

But Kautsky does not understand this truth, so obvious to every worker, because he has forgotten how to put the question: democracy for what class? If he starts from "pure" (does it mean non-class or above-class?) democracy and simply says: Without equality of all citizens there can be no democracy, one has to ask the learned Mr. Kautsky, the "Marxist" and the "Socialist," the following question: Can there be any equality between the exploited and the exploiters? It is monstrous, it is incredible, that one should have to ask such a question in discussing a book by the leading thinker of the Second International. But there is no way of escaping from this necessity. In writing about Kautsky one has to explain to him, learned man that he is, why there can be no equality between the exploiters and the exploited.

CHAPTER III.

CAN THERE BE EQUALITY BETWEEN THE EXPLOITERS AND THE EXPLOITED?

KAUTSKY says "The exploiters always formed but a small minority of the population" (p. 14).

This is certainly true. Taking it as the starting point, what should be the argument? One may argue in a Marxist, in a Socialist way, taking as a basis the relation between the exploited and the exploiter, or one may argue in a Liberal, in a bourgeois-democratic way, taking as a basis the relation of the majority to the minority.

If we argue in a Marxist way we must say: The exploiters must inevitably turn the State (we are speaking of a democracy, that is, one of the forms of State) into an instrument of domination of their class over the class of exploited. Hence, so long as there are exploiters ruling the majority of exploited, the democratic State must inevitably be a democracy for the exploiters. The State of the exploited must fundamentally differ from such a State; it must be a democracy for the exploited, a political order of suppression of the exploiters. But the suppression of a class means inequality in so far as this class is concerned, and its exemption from the privileges of "democracy."

If, on the other hand, we argue in a bourgeois-

Liberal way, we have to say: The majority decides and the minority obeys. Those who do not obey are punished. And this is all. There is no need of talking about the class character of the State in general, or about "pure democracy" in particular, since it would not be relevant. The majority is the majority and the minority is the minority. That ends the matter. And this is just Kautsky's way of reasoning. He says:

"Why should the rule of the proletariat necessarily receive a form which is incompatible with democracy?" (p. 21). There follows a very detailed and a very verbose explanation, garnished with a quotation from Marx and the figures of the elections to the Paris Commune, of the fact that the proletariat is always in a majority. The conclusion is: "A régime which is so strongly rooted in the masses has not the slightest reason for infringing democracy. It cannot, it is true, always do without violence, as, for instance, in cases when violence is employed to put down democracy. Force is the only reply to force. But a régime which is aware of the support of the masses will only employ force and violence for the *protection*, and not for the *destruction*, of democracy. It would simply commit suicide if it wanted to destroy its own most secure basis—universal suffrage, that deep source of mighty moral authority." (p. 22).

You see that the relation between the exploited and the exploiters has entirely vanished in Kautsky's arguments, and all that remains is a majority in general, a minority in general, a democracy in

general, that is, the "pure democracy" which is already familiar to us. And all this, mark you, is said *à propos* of the Commune of Paris! Let us quote, by way of illustration, how Marx and Engels discuss the subject of dictatorship, also *à propos* of the Commune: *Marx*: "When the workers put in the place of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie . . . their revolutionary dictatorship . . . in order to break down the resistance of the bourgeoisie . . . the workers invest the State with a revolutionary and temporary form . . ." *Engels*: "The party which has triumphed in the revolution is necessarily compelled to maintain its rule by means of that fear with which its arms inspire the reactionaries. If the Commune of Paris had not based itself on the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie, would it have maintained itself more than twenty-four hours? Are we not, on the contrary, justified in blaming the Commune for having made too little use of its authority?"

Engels: "As the State is only a temporary institution which is to be made use of in the revolution, in order forcibly to suppress the opponents, it is a perfect absurdity to speak about the free popular State; so long as the proletariat still needs the State, it needs it, not in the interest of freedom, but in order to suppress its opponents, and when it becomes possible to speak of freedom, the State as such ceases to exist."

The distance between Kautsky, on the one hand, and Marx and Engels, on the other, is as great as between heaven and earth, as between the bourgeois

Liberal and the proletarian revolutionary. Pure democracy, or simple "democracy," of which Kautsky speaks, is but a paraphrase of the "free popular State," that is, a perfect *absurdity*. Kautsky, with the learned air of a most learned arm-chair fool, or else with the innocent air of a ten-year-old girl, is asking: Why do we need a dictatorship when we have a majority? And Marx and Engels explain: In order to break down the resistance of the bourgeoisie; in order to inspire the reactionaries with fear; in order to maintain the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie; in order that the proletariat may forcibly suppress its enemies!

But Kautsky does not understand these explanations. He is infatuated with the "pure democracy," he does not see its bourgeois character, and "consistently" urges that the majority, once it is the majority, has no need "to break down the resistance" of the minority, has no need "forcibly to suppress" it: it is sufficient to suppress cases of *infraction* of the democracy. Infatuated with the "purity" of democracy, Kautsky unwittingly commits the same little error which is committed by all bourgeois democrats, namely, he accepts the formal equality, which under capitalism is only a fraud and a piece of hypocrisy, at its face value as a *de facto* equality. Quite a bagatelle!

But the exploiter cannot be equal to the exploited. This is a truth which, however disgraceful to Kautsky, is nevertheless of the essence of Socialism. Another truth is that there can be, in reality, no *de facto* equality, unless and until the possibility of

exploitation of one class by another has been abolished.

It is possible, by means of a successful insurrection in the centre or of a mutiny in the army, to defeat the exploiters at one blow, but except in very rare and particular cases, the exploiters cannot be destroyed at once. It is impossible to expropriate at one blow all the landlords and capitalists of a large country. In addition, expropriation alone, as a legal or political act, does not by far settle the matter, since it is necessary practically to replace the landlords and capitalists, to substitute for theirs another, a *working class*, management of the factories and estates. There can be no equality between the exploiters, who, for many generations have enjoyed education and the advantages and habits of prosperity, and the exploited, the majority of whom, even in the most advanced and the most democratic bourgeois republics, are cowed, frightened, ignorant, unorganised. It is inevitable that the exploiters should still enjoy a large number of great practical advantages for a considerable period after the revolution. They still have money (since it is impossible to abolish money at once), some moveable property (often of a considerable extent), social connections, habits of organisation and management, knowledge of all the secrets (customs, methods, means, and possibilities) of administration, higher education, closeness to the higher personnel of technical experts (who live and think after the bourgeois style), and incomparably higher knowledge and experience in military affairs (which

is very important), and so forth, and so forth. If the exploiters are defeated in one country only—and this, of course, is the rule, since a simultaneous revolution in a number of countries is a rare exception—they still remain stronger than the exploited, because the international connections of the exploiters are enormous. And that a portion of the exploited from among the least intelligent section of the "middle" peasant and artisan class may and, indeed, do follow the exploiters, has been shown hitherto by all revolutions, including the Commune of Paris (since there were proletarians also among the troops of Versailles, which the most learned Kautsky seems to have forgotten).

In these circumstances to suppose that in any serious revolution the issue is decided by the simple relation between majority and minority, is the acme of stupidity, a typical delusion of an ordinary bourgeois Liberal, as well as a *deception of the masses* from whom a well-established historical truth is concealed. This truth is that in any and every serious revolution *a long*, *obstinate*, *desperate* resistance of the exploiters, who for many years will yet enjoy great advantages over the exploited, constitutes the rule. Never, except in the sentimental Utopia of the sentimental Mr. Kautsky, will the exploiters submit to the decision of the exploited majority without making use of their advantages in a last desperate battle, or in a series of battles.

The transition from capitalism to Communism forms a whole historical epoch. Until it is complete, the exploiters will still retain the hope of a restora-

tion, and this hope will inevitably express itself in *attempts* at restoration. After the first serious defeat, the overthrown exploiters who did not expect their overthrow, did not believe in it, did not admit even the thought of it, will with tenfold energy, with mad passion, and with a hate intensified to an extreme degree, throw themselves into the fray in order to get back their lost paradise for themselves and their families, who formerly led such a pleasant life, and who are now condemned by the "rascals," the "mob," to ruin or penury (or "ordinary" labour). And these capitalist exploiters will necessarily be followed by a wide stream of the petty bourgeoisie, as to whom decades of historical experience of all countries bear witness that they are constantly oscillating and hesitating, to-day following the proletariat, and to-morrow taking fright at the difficulties of the revolution, succumbing with panic after the first defeat or semi-defeat of the workers, giving way to "nerves," whining, running hither and thither, deserting from one camp to another—just like our Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries!

And in face of this condition of things, at the time of a most desperate war, when history is placing on the order of the day the question of the life and death of age-long privileges—at this time to talk about majority and minority, about pure democracy, about the superfluity of the dictatorship, and equality between the exploiter and the exploited—what bottomless stupidity and philistinism are needed to do it! But, of course, the decades of

comparatively "peaceful" capitalism between 1871 and 1914 had accumulated in the opportunist-minded Socialist parties whole Augean stables of Philistinism, imbecility, and mockery.

The reader will have noticed that Kautsky, in the above-quoted passage from his pamphlet, speaks of an attempt against universal suffrage (extolling it, by the way, as a deep source of mighty moral authority, as against Engels who *à propos* of the same Commune and of the same question of dictatorship spoke of the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie—a very characteristic difference between the Philistine's and the revolutionist's view of "authority"). One may say in this connection that the question about the suppression of the franchise of the exploiter is *entirely a Russian question*, and not at all one of the dictatorship of the proletariat in general. If Kautsky, without hypocrisy, had entitled his pamphlet: "Against the Bolsheviks," the title would have corresponded to the contents of the pamphlet, and Kautsky would have been justified in speaking of the question of franchise. But Kautsky wanted to write as a "theoretician." He called his pamphlet *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. He speaks about the Soviets and about Russia in the second part of the pamphlet only, beginning with its fifth section. In its first part from which I quoted, the subject matter is democracy and dictatorship in general. Kautsky, by raising the question of the franchise, has given himself away as a literary opponent of the Bolsheviks, who cares not a brass farthing for theory. For

a theoretical discussion of the *general* (in contradiction to national and particular) class-basis of democracy and dictatorship ought to deal, not with a *special* question, such as that of the franchise, but with the general question whether democracy can be preserved for the rich and the exploiters as well as for the exploited, at the historical moment of the overthrow of the former, and the substitution, in the place of *their* State, of the State of the exploited? This is the only form in which the question can be put by a theoretical inquirer.

We all know the example of the Commune, we all know what the founders of Marxism said in connection with it. On the strength of their pronouncement I examined the question of democracy and dictatorship in my book, *The State and Revolution*, which I wrote before the November revolution. The restriction of the franchise was not touched by me at all. At present it might be added that the question of the restriction of the franchise is a specific national question, and not one relating to dictatorship in general. One must study the question of the restriction of the franchise in the light of the *specific* conditions of the *Russian* revolution and the specific course of its development. This will be done in subsequent pages. But it would be rash to guarantee in advance that the impending proletarian revolution in Europe will all, or for the most part, be accompanied by a restriction of the franchise in the case of the bourgeoisie. This may be so. In fact, after the war and after the experience of the Russian revolution it will probably be so. But it

is not absolutely necessary for the establishment of a dictatorship. It is not necessarily implied in the idea of dictatorship, it does not enter as a necessary condition into the historical or class conception of dictatorship. What forms a necessary aspect, or a necessary condition of dictatorship, is the forcible suppression of the exploiters as a class, and consequently an infringement of "pure democracy," that is, of equality and freedom, *in respect of that class.*

In this way alone can the question be theoretically discussed; and, by not doing so, Kautsky has proved that he came forward against the Bolsheviks, not as a theoretical inquirer, but as a sycophant of the opportunists and of the bourgeoisie.

The question: In what countries and under what national peculiarities of this or that Capitalism a wholesale or partial restriction of democracy will be applied to the exploiters, is the question of just those national peculiarities of capitalism and of this or that revolution, and has nothing to do with the theoretical question at issue, which is this: Is a dictatorship of the proletariat possible without an infringement of democracy in respect of the class of exploiters? Kautsky has evaded this, the only theoretically important, question. He has quoted all sorts of passages from Marx and Engels, except the one relating to the subject, and quoted by me. He talks about everything that may be pleasant to bourgeois Liberals and democrats and does not go beyond their system of ideas. As for the main thing, namely, that the proletariat cannot triumph without breaking the resistance of the bourgeoisie,

without forcibly suppressing its enemies, and that where there is forcible suppression there is, of course, no "freedom," no democracy—this Kautsky did not understand.

We shall now pass to the consideration of the experience of the Russian revolution and of that divergence between the Soviets and the Constituent Assembly which led to the forcible dissolution of the latter and to the withdrawal of the franchise from the bourgeoisie.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SOVIETS MUST NOT BECOME STATE ORGANISATIONS.

THE Soviets are the Russian form of proletarian democracy. If a Marxist theoretician, writing on the dictatorship of the proletariat, seriously set himself to study the subject (and not merely to repeat the petty bourgeois lamentations over dictatorship, as Kautsky does in repeating the Menshevik elegies) he would first give a general definition of dictatorship, and then examine its peculiar national form, the Soviets, and give a criticism of them as one of the forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It goes without saying that nothing of this kind is to be expected from Kautsky after his Liberal interpretation of Marx's theory of the dictatorship. It is, however, highly interesting to see how he approached the question of what the Soviets are, and how he dealt with it.

The Soviets, he says, recalling their rise in 1905, have created "a form of proletarian organisation which is the most embracing of all, since it includes all wage workers" (p. 31). In 1905 they were local bodies, in 1917 they became national organisations for the entire country. "Already now," Kautsky continues, "the Soviet organisation has behind it a great and glorious history, and it has a still more

mighty future before it, and this not in Russia alone. It appears everywhere that the old methods of economic and political warfare are no longer effective against the gigantic forces which financial capital has at its disposal, both politically and economically. The old methods cannot be discarded; they are still needed for normal times. But from time to time problems arise with which they are unable to cope, and which can only successfully be dealt with by the concentration of all the political and economic weapons of the working class."

Then follows a disquisition about the mass-strike, and about the "trade union bureaucracy" which is indispensable as the trades unions themselves, but which "is not equal to the task of directing such mighty mass-battles as are becoming more and more the order of the day. . . ." Thus (Kautsky concludes) the Soviet organisation is one of the most important phenomena of our time. It promises to acquire an importance in the great decisive battles between capital and labour which are looming in the near future." . . . "But are we justified in demanding of the Soviets more? The Bolsheviks who, after the November revolution, obtained, in conjunction with the Left Social Revolutionaries, a majority on the Soviets, after the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly, set out to turn the Soviets from a *militant* organisation of *one class* into a *State* organisation. They destroyed the democracy which the Russian people had won in the March revolution, and accordingly ceased to call

themselves *Social-Democrats* and assumed the name of *Communists*." (p. 33).

Persons familiar with the Russian Menshevik literature will at once see with what servile fidelity Kautsky has been copying Martov, Axelrod, Stein and Co. Yes, "servile fidelity," because Kautsky, to a ridiculous degree, distorts the facts in order to please Menshevik prejudices. Kautsky did not take the pains, for instance, of informing himself at his source (of Stein, at Berlin, or of Axelrod at Stockholm) when the question about changing the name of the Bolsheviks and about the importance of the Soviets as State institutions was first raised. If Kautsky had done so, he would not have penned these lines which are now calculated to provoke laughter, since both these questions were raised by the Bolsheviks in April, 1917 (as for instance, in my theses of April 4/17, 1917)* that is, long before the November revolution of 1917 (and therefore *a fortiori* before the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly in January, 1918).

But Kautsky's argument which I have just quoted contains the *crux* of the entire question about the Soviets. This crux mainly is: Must the Soviets aspire to become State institutions (the Bolsheviks put forward the demand in April, 1917, that the whole power must belong to the Soviets, and at the party conference in the same month they declared that they were no longer satisfied with a bourgeois parliamentary republic, but demanded a workers'

*The *first* date given as above is the Old Style. This applies throughout the book.

and peasants' republic of the Commune or Soviet type); or must the Soviets not aspire to assume State authority and to become State institutions, and must they remain "militant organisations of one class" (as Martov used to put it, discreetly concealing under this innocent wish the fact that the Soviets under Menshevik leadership were the *instrument of subjection of the workers by the bourgeoisie*)?

Kautsky, in a servile manner, has repeated Martov's words, picking out fragments from a theoretical controversy between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, and transplanting them, without rhyme or reason, on to the general theoretical and European field. The result is such a *quid pro quo* muddle as to provoke Homeric laughter in every intelligent Russian worker who hears of these arguments of Kautsky. No doubt, with the same laughter, Mr. Kautsky will be greeted by every worker in Europe (except a handful of inveterate Socialist Imperialists) who learns what the question at issue is. Indeed, Kautsky has rendered Martov a bad service by reducing to an obvious absurdity Martov's error. Let us, indeed, examine the result of Kautsky's arguments.

The Soviets embrace all wage workers. As against financial capital all the previous methods of economic and political struggle of the proletariat are inadequate. The Soviets have a great future before them even outside Russia. They will play a decisive part in the great final battles between capital and labour in Europe. This is what Kautsky says.

Very well. But will not the "final battles be-

tween capital and labour" decide the question which of the two classes will get possession of the power in the State? God forbid anything of the kind! In the "final" battles the organisations which embrace all the wage workers *must not become State institutions*.

But what is the State? The State is nothing but a machine for the suppression of one class by another. It appears, then, that the oppressed class, the advance guard of all those who labour and are exploited in modern society, must take up the final battles between capital and labour, but must not touch the machine through which labour is oppressed by capital! It must not break up that machine! It must not make use of its all-embracing organisation to suppress the exploiters! Excellent, magnificent, Mr. Kautsky! "We" recognise the class-war, as it is recognised by the Liberals: that is, without the overthrow of the bourgeoisie!

Here is where the complete rupture of Kautsky with Marxian Socialism becomes patent and obvious. This is, practically, a desertion to the camp of the bourgeoisie, which is also prepared to admit everything except the transformation of the organisations of the oppressed class into State institutions. Kautsky can no longer save his position in trying to reconcile everything and everybody and to avoid all contradiction by means of phrases. One of the two: either Kautsky rejects all transference of State power to the working class, or he admits that the working class may take over the old bourgeois State machinery, but objects to its being

broken up and replaced by a new proletarian machine. Whether Kautsky's arguments are interpreted one way or another, his break with Marxism and his desertion to the bourgeoisie are obvious.

Already in the *Communist Manifesto*, when describing what sort of State a triumphant working class needs, Marx defined it as "a State, that is, the proletariat organised as the ruling class." Now we have a man pretending to be a Marxist who says that the proletariat, organised to a man and waging a final battle against capital, must not make its class organisation a State organisation! Here Kautsky has betrayed that "superstitious faith in the State" of which Engels wrote as far back as 1891 as "having passed in Germany into the common mind of the bourgeoisie, and even among the workers." Fight on, workers—our Philistine agrees (as every bourgeois agrees, since the workers are fighting all the same: one has only to find the means to blunt their sword)—fight on, but dare not to win! You must not destroy the State machinery of the bourgeoisie, you must not substitute in the place of the bourgeois State organisation the proletarian State organisation.

One who sincerely shares the Marxist view that the State is but a machine for the suppression of one class by another, and who has reflected upon this truth, could not have reached the absurd conclusion that the proletarian organisations capable of defeating financial capital must not become State organisations. The petty bourgeois, to whom the State is something standing outside or above classes,

stands here fully revealed. Why, indeed, is the proletariat, "one class only," to be permitted to wage a "decisive" struggle against capital which dominates not only the proletariat, but also the entire people, including petty bourgeoisie and the entire peasantry, and yet not be permitted to turn its organisation into a State organisation? For the simple reason that the petty bourgeois is afraid of the class struggle, and breaks it off before it reaches its end, that is, its chief object.

Kautsky has landed into a morass and has given himself away. Mark you, he himself admits that Europe is on the eve of decisive struggles between capital and labour, and that the former methods of economic and political warfare of the proletariat are inadequate. But these methods just consist in taking advantage of *bourgeois* democracy; hence—but Kautsky is afraid to think out what follows. But *we* can say: Hence only a reactionary, only an enemy of the working class, only a henchman of the bourgeoisie, can at present praise the charms of bourgeois democracy and talk about "pure" democracy, turning his face towards the dead past. Bourgeois democracy *was* an advance as compared with the Middle Ages, and it was necessary to take advantage of it. But now it is inadequate for the purposes of the working class. Now we must look, not backward, but forward, to the substitution of a proletarian democracy in the place of a bourgeois democracy. And although the preparatory work for the proletarian revolution, the formation and the drilling of the proletarian army,

was possible and necessary within the framework of the bourgeois democratic State, yet, once we have come up to the decisive issue, to the final battles, it is treachery to the working class to try to confine the proletariat to this framework.

Kautsky has made himself the more ridiculous as he has repeated an argument by Martov, without noticing that with Martov, it was based upon another argument which he, Kautsky, has not adduced. Martov said (and Kautsky repeats it) that Russia was not yet ripe for Socialism. Hence followed the deduction that it was too early to turn the Soviets into State organisations (read: it is quite time to turn the Soviets, with the assistance of Menshevik leaders, into instruments of subjection of the workers to the Imperialist bourgeoisie). But Kautsky cannot argue directly that Europe is not ripe for Socialism. As far back as 1909, when he was not as yet a turncoat, he argued that there was no reason to fear a *premature* revolution, and that he would be a traitor who should repudiate the revolution, for fear of defeat. This opinion Kautsky cannot repudiate directly, and so we get the absurdity which lays bare the entire imbecility and cowardice of the small bourgeois: on the one hand, Europe is ripe for Socialism, and is on the eve of decisive battles between Capital and Labour; on the other hand, the *fighting* organisation (which, moreover, consolidates and acquires strength in battle), the organisation of the proletariat which is the advance guard, the organiser and the leader of the oppressed masses, must not become a State organisation!

From a practical point of view, the idea that the Soviets are necessary as fighting organisations, but must not become State institutions, is even more absurd than it is in the theoretical respect. Even in peaceful times, when the situation is not revolutionary, the mass struggle of the workers against the capitalists—for instance, a mass strike—causes passion to run very high on either side, provokes great bitterness and rage, the bourgeoisie constantly insisting that it must remain "master in its own house," etc. But in the time of revolution, when political life reaches, one may say, the boiling point, an organisation like the Soviets, which embraces *all* workers, *all* industries, and ultimately also *all* soldiers, and the *entire* labouring and poor population of the villages, must inevitably, in the course of the struggle, and by the mere logic of attack and defence, bring the questions of power to a direct issue. All attempts to take up a middle position and to "reconcile" the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, appear then as acts of imbecility and prove a miserable failure. Such has been the fate of the efforts of Martov and his friends in Russia, and such will inevitably also be the fate of similar attempts in Germany and other countries, if the Soviets should succeed in striking root, in gaining strength, and in linking up with one another. To tell the Soviets: fight, but do not take over the entire State authority, do not become State institutions, is tantamount to preaching the co-operation of classes and "social peace" between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The bare idea is preposterous that such a position

amid passionate strife could lead to anything else than a disgraceful collapse. It is, however, the eternal fate of Kautsky to sit between two stools. He puts on an air as if he did not agree with the opportunists on any theoretical question, but in *practice* he agrees with them on everything that is essential (i.e., on everything that pertains to the revolution).

CHAPTER V.

THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND THE SOVIET REPUBLIC.

THE question of the Constituent Assembly and its dispersal by the Bolsheviks constitutes the crux of the entire book of Kautsky. He constantly returns to it, and the whole literary production of the theoretical leader of the Second International is stuffed with innuendoes as to how the Bolsheviks had "destroyed democracy." The question is really an interesting and important one, since in that case the relation between bourgeois and proletarian democracy arose before the revolution in a *practical* form. Let us see how the question has been dealt with by our "Marxist theoretician."

He quotes my thesis about the Constituent Assembly which were drafted and published by me in the *Pravda* of December 26th, 1917 (January 8th, 1918). It might seem that there could be no better proof of Kautsky's seriousness in treating the subject in a business-like, documentary fashion. But observe *how* he quotes. He does not tell us that there were nineteen such theses; he does not tell us that they dealt both with the question of the relation between the ordinary bourgeois republic with a

Constituent Assembly, on the one hand, and a Soviet Republic on the other, *and* the history of the divergence, in the course of our revolution, between the Constituent Assembly and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Kautsky suppresses all that, and simply tells the reader, that "the most important of these theses were two"; one, that the Socialist Revolutionaries split into two sections, after the elections to the Constituent Assembly and before its meeting (Kautsky does not mention that this was the fifth thesis), and the other, that the republic of the Soviets is in general a higher democratic form than the Constituent Assembly (Kautsky does not mention that this was the third thesis). From this third thesis Kautsky quotes in full only the following part of it: "The Republic of the Soviets represents not only a higher type of democratic institution (in comparison with the *ordinary* bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly at its head), but also the only form calculated to secure the most painless transition to Socialism" (Kautsky omits the word "ordinary" and the introductory words of the thesis: "for the transition from the bourgeois to the Socialist order, for the dictatorship of the proletariat").

Having quoted these words, Kautsky, with a magnificent irony, exclaims: "Pity that this conclusion was only reached after the Bolsheviks had found themselves in a minority in the Constituent Assembly. Previously no one had demanded it more passionately than Lenin."

This is textually what Kautsky says on page 31 of

his book. This is really a gem.* Only a sycophant of the bourgeoisie could present the question so that the reader should get a wrong impression, as if all the talk of the Bolsheviks about the higher type of State were an invention born into the world *after* they had found themselves in a minority in the Constituent Assembly. Such an infamous lie could only have been uttered by a scoundrel who has sold himself to the bourgeoisie, or what is absolutely the same thing, who has placed his trust in P. Axelrod, and is concealing the source of his information. For it is known to all the world that on the very first day of my return to Russia, on April 4/17, 1917, I delivered a public lecture in which I proclaimed the superiority of a Commune type of State over the bourgeois parliamentary republic. I afterwards repeatedly stated this in print, as, for instance, in a pamphlet on political parties, which was translated into English and was published in January, 1918, in the *New York Evening Post.* Moreover, at the end of April, 1917, the Conference of the Bolshevik Party adopted a resolution to the effect that a proletarian and peasant republic was higher than a bourgeois parliamentary republic, that our party would not be satisfied with the latter, and

*Kautsky, among other things, quotes repeatedly, with an evident attempt at sarcasm, the expression "most painless." But since this is an attempt for no noble purpose, Kautsky a few pages later commits a little forgery and simply quotes: "painless transition." Naturally, it is not difficult by such means to put into the mouth of an opponent any absurdity. The forgery also facilitates the evasion of the argument *materially,* namely, that the most painless transition towards Socialism is only possible with the help of the organisation of all the poorer classes (in Soviets) and of the central State power (of the proletariat).

that the programme of our party ought to be amended correspondingly.

In face of these facts, what name can be given to Kautsky's procedure in telling his German readers that I had passionately been demanding the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, and that I began to speak derogatorily of the dignity of the Constituent Assembly *after* the Bolsheviks had been left in a minority in it? How can one excuse such a procedure? Did not Kautsky know the facts? Then he should not have written about the matter at all. Why did he not honestly declare that he was writing on the strength of information supplied by the Mensheviks, by Stein, Axelrod, and Co.? Kautsky obviously wants, by his pretence to be objective, to conceal his rôle as the handmaid of the defeated and disappointed Mensheviks.

However, these are only small things in comparison with what follows. Granted that Kautsky would not or could not obtain from his informants a translation of the Bolshevik resolutions and declarations on the question whether they were satisfied with a bourgeois parliamentary democratic republic or not. Let us grant this, although the thing is incredible. But surely he must have known my theses of December 26th, 1917 (January 8th, 1918), since he mentions them on page 30 of his book? Does he know them in full, or only such parts of them as have been translated for him by Stein, Axelrod, and Co.? Kautsky quotes my third thesis on the *fundamental* question whether the Bolsheviks were of the opinion, before the elections to the

Constituent Assembly, that the Soviet republic was of a higher type than the bourgeois republic, and whether they said so to people. But he does not quote the second thesis, which ran as follows: "While demanding the summoning of a Constituent Assembly, the revolutionary Social-Democracy has *repeatedly*, since the very beginning of the revolution of 1917, *emphasised the view that the Soviet republic is a higher form of democracy than the ordinary bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly.*

In order to represent the Bolsheviks as bereft of all principles, as "revolutionary opportunists" (this is a term which Kautsky employs somewhere in his book in some connection which I now no longer remember), Mr. Kautsky has concealed from his German readers that there was in the theses a *direct* reference to *repeated* declarations. Such are the contemptible, petty methods employed by Mr. Kautsky! He has thus once more avoided the theoretical side of the question. Is it, or is it not, true that the bourgeois democratic parliamentary republic is a lower form than a republic of the Commune or Soviet type? This is the essential question, and Kautsky has avoided it. All that Marx gave us in his analysis of the Commune of Paris has been forgotten by Kautsky. He has also forgotten Engel's letter to Bebel on March 28th, 1875, in which the same idea of Marx is formulated in a practical, terse, and clear fashion: "The Commune was no longer a State in the proper sense of the word."

Here you have the most prominent theorist of the

Second International, who, in a special pamphlet on the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat," in a special discussion on Russia, where the question of a higher form of State than a democratic bourgeois republic was raised repeatedly in a direct manner, avoiding again and again the issue. In what does this procedure differ from desertion to the bourgeois camp? (Let us observe, in passing, that in this respect also Kautsky is merely treading in the footsteps of the Russian Mensheviks. There are among the Mensheviks any number of people who know all passages from Marx and Engels, but not one of them has attempted, between April and November, 1917, and between November, 1917, and November, 1918, to examine and discuss the question of the Commune type of State. Plekhanov, too, has avoided the question. Evidently discretion is the better part of his valour, too).

It goes without saying that to talk about the suppression of the Constituent Assembly with persons who call themselves Socialists and Marxists, but in practice desert to the bourgeoisie on the main question, on the question of the Commune type of State, would be tantamount to casting pearls before swine. It will be enough if I print in an appendix to the present book my thesis on the Constituent Assembly in full. The reader will then see that the subject was formulated by me on December 26th, 1917 (January 8th, 1918), both theoretically and historically, and as a question of practical politics.

Although Kautsky, as a theoretician, has completely renounced Marxism, he nevertheless, as an

historian, might have examined the question of the struggle of the Soviets with the Constituent Assembly. We know by many of the writings of Kautsky that he *could* be a Marxist historian, and that these works of his will remain a permanent gift to the proletariat in spite of his subsequent apostasy. But on the given question Kautsky also renounces truth as an historian, ignoring well-established facts, and thus acting as a sycophant. He wanted to represent the Bolsheviks as a party without principles, and he tells the reader how they tried to soften the conflict with the Constituent Assembly before dispersing it. There is absolutely nothing in that procedure of ours of which we ought to feel ashamed. I print my theses in full, and there I say quite plainly, addressing the timorous and hesitating petty bourgeoisie, who had obtained a majority in the Constituent Assembly: either accept the proletarian dictatorship or we shall crush you by revolutionary methods (theses 18 and 19). Such has ever been and will be the action of a really revolutionary proletariat in its relations to the halting and wavering petty bourgeoisie.

Kautsky adopts, on the question of the Constituent Assembly, a purely formal standpoint, whereas I say in my theses repeatedly and plainly that the interests of the revolution are above the formal rights of the Constituent Assembly (theses 16 and 17). The formal democratic point of view is just the point of view of a bourgeois democrat, who does not recognise that the interests of the proletariat and of the proletarian class-

war stand above everything else. As an historian, Kautsky would not have been able to deny that bourgeois parliaments are the organs of this or another class; but now Kautsky wanted (in the interests of the dirty cause of abandoning the revolution) to forget his Marxism, and therefore he carefully avoids asking the question as to what class the Constituent Assembly of Russia was the organ of. Kautsky does not examine the concrete conditions; he does not want to face the facts; he does not mention by one single word to his German readers that my theses contained not only a theoretical elucidation of the question about the limited character of bourgeois democracy (theses 1-3), not only an outline of the concrete conditions which had determined discrepancy between the party lists in the middle of October, 1917, and the real state of affairs in December, 1917 (theses 4-6), but also a history of the class struggle and civil war in October-December, 1917 (theses 7-13). I then drew from this concrete history the conclusion (thesis 14) that the watchword: "All power to the Constituent Assembly," had become in reality a watchword of the Cadets, the Kaledinites, and their myrmidons.

Kautsky, the historian, does not see anything of that sort. Kautsky, the historian, has never heard that universal suffrage yields sometimes petty bourgeois, and at other times counter-revolutionary, parliaments. Kautsky, the Marxist historian, has never heard that the method of elections and the form of democracy are one thing, and the class-content of a given institution is another thing. Yet

the question about the class-content of the Constituent Assembly was raised by me and answered in my theses. Possibly my answer was not correct. Nothing would have been so welcome to me as a Marxist criticism of my analysis by an outsider. Instead of writing silly phrases (there are plenty such phrases in Kautsky's book) about somebody, somehow, preventing a criticism of Bolshevism, he ought to have set out to make such criticism. But the point is just that he has no such criticism to offer. He does not even raise the question about the class character of the Soviets on the one hand, and of the Constituent Assembly on the other. Hence there is no possibility of discussing with Kautsky. All that remains for me to do is to show to the reader why Kautsky cannot be called by any other name than a turncoat.

The divergence between the Soviets and the Constituent Assembly has its history, which even an historian who does not share the point of view of class-war could not ignore. Kautsky refuses even to touch upon this history. Kautsky has concealed from his German readers the universally known fact (which is now also suppressed by rabid Mensheviks) that the divergence between the Soviets and the "State" (that is, the bourgeois) institutions had existed even at the time of the predominance of the Mensheviks, that is, between the middle of March and October, 1917. Kautsky, in substance, takes up the position of an advocate of conciliation and cooperation between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. However much Kautsky may deny this, it is

a fact borne out by his whole book We ought not to have suppressed the Constituent Assembly—that means, we ought not to have fought out the fight with the bourgeoisie to a finish; we ought not to have overthrown it, and the proletariat ought to have effected a reconciliation with the bourgeoisie.

But if so, why has Kautsky suppressed the fact that the Mensheviks had been engaged in this glorious work between March and November, 1917, and had not achieved anything? If a reconciliation between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat was possible, why did not the Mensheviks succeed in bringing it about? Why was the bourgeoisie holding itself aloof from the Soviets? Why did the Mensheviks themselves call the Soviets "Revolutionary Democracy," and the bourgeoisie the "propertied elements"? Kautsky has not told his German readers that it was precisely the Mensheviks who, in the period of their predominance, called the Soviets "Revolutionary Democracy," thereby admitting their superiority over all other institutions. It is only this concealment of an important fact which has made it appear in Kautsky's book as if the divergence between the Soviets and the bourgeoisie had no history, and had arisen suddenly, without any particular cause, simply through the wickedness of the Bolsheviks. As a matter of fact, it was just the experience of the Menshevik policy of compromise, the attempts at reconciling the proletariat with the bourgeoisie, undertaken by the Mensheviks, and extending over a period of more than six months (a period which is very long for a revolution) that

convinced the people of the futility of such methods, and drove the proletariat away from the Mensheviks.

Kautsky admits that the Soviets are a most excellent fighting organisation of the proletariat, and that they have a great future before them. But if so, Kautsky's position collapses like a house of cards, or like the utopia of a petty bourgeois, who believes that one can do without an acute struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. For a revolution is one continuous, desperate struggle, while the proletariat is the advance guard of all the oppressed, the focus and centre of all aspirations of all the oppressed striving for their liberation. It is natural, therefore, that the Soviets, as the instrument of the oppressed masses, should have reflected and expressed the moods and changes of view of these masses much more rapidly, much more fully, and much more faithfully, than any other institutions. In this, among other things, lies one of the reasons why the Soviet democracy is the highest type of democracy.

In the period between March 12th and November 6th, 1917, the Soviets held two All-Russian Congresses, representing the overwhelming majority of the population of Russia, all the workers and soldiers, and 70 per cent. or 80 per cent. of the peasantry; not to speak of the vast number of local, district, urban, provincial, and regional congresses. During the same period, the bourgeoisie did not succeed in calling into life a single institution which represented the majority of the people, except that obvious and insulting sham, the so-called Demo-

cratic Conference, which enraged the proletariat. The Constituent Assembly reflected the same mood and the same grouping of the population as the first (the June) All-Russian Congress of Soviets. By the time of the meeting of the Constituent Assembly in January, 1918, the second and third Congress of Soviets had met in November, 1917, and January, 1918, respectively, and both demonstrated up to the hilt that the masses had gone to the Left, had become revolutionary, had turned away from the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries, and passed over to the Bolshevik side; that is, had turned away from petty bourgeois leadership, from illusory compromises with the bourgeoisie, and joined the revolutionary fight for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. Thus, even the *external* history of the Soviets shows how inevitable the suppression of the Constituent Assembly was, and how reactionary that body was. But Kautsky stoically persists in his watchword: "May the revolution perish, may the bourgeoisie triumph over the proletariat, so long as 'pure democracy' flourishes!" *Fiat justitia, pereat mundus!*

These are the figures of the Russian Congress of Soviets in their development in the course of the Russian revolution:—

All-Russian Congresses of Soviets.	No. of Delegates	No. of Bolsheviks.	P'centage of Bolsheviks.
1st, 16th June, 1917	790	103	13 p.c.
2nd, 10th November, 1917	675	343	51 p.c.
3rd, 23rd January, 1918	710	434	61 p.c.
4th, 20th March, 1918	1,232	795	64 p.c.
5th, 17th July, 1918	1,164	773	66 p.c.

A glance at these figures will show why the defence of the Constituent Assembly and the talk (of Kautsky, among other people) that the Bolsheviks have not behind them a majority of the population is met in Russia with laughter.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SOVIET CONSTITUTION.

AS I have pointed out already, the disfranchisement of the bourgeois does not constitute a necessary element of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Nor did the Bolsheviks in Russia, when putting forward the demand for such a dictatorship, long before the November revolution, say anything in advance about the disfranchisement of the exploiters. This particular element of the dictatorship was not born according to a plan conceived by some party, but grew up spontaneously in the course of the fight. Of course, Kautsky, the historian, has not noticed this. He has not perceived that even at the time of the predominance of the Mensheviks, those advocates of a compromise with the bourgeoisie in the Soviets, the bourgeoisie of its own accord separated itself from the Soviets, boycotted them, put itself up and intrigued against them. The Soviets arose without any constitution, and existed for more than twelve months (from the spring of 1917 to the summer of 1918) without any constitution. The rage of the bourgeoisie against these independent and omnipotent (because all-embracing) organisations of the oppressed; the unscrupulous, self-seeking and dirty fight of the bourgeoisie against the Soviets; and lastly, the overt participation of the bourgeoisie, from the Cadets to

the Right Social-Revolutionaries, from Miliukov to Kerensky, in the Kornilov mutiny—all this had prepared the formal exclusion of the bourgeoisie from the Soviets.

Kautsky has heard about this Kornilov business, but majestically snaps his fingers at historical facts and at the course and the forms of the fight which had determined the forms of the dictatorship. Why, indeed, take stock of facts when "pure democracy" is the sole question at issue? Kautsky's criticism directed against the disfranchisement of the bourgeoisie is, therefore, characterised by a sweet naïveté which would have been touching in a child, but which is repulsive in a person who has not yet been officially certified to be feeble-minded.

"If the capitalists under universal suffrage had found themselves an insignificant minority, they would have more easily reconciled themselves to their fate" (p. 33). Is it not charming? Clever Kautsky has seen many instances in history, and, of course, knows it perfectly well by observation of real life, that there are plenty of such landlords and capitalists who are ready to obey the will of a majority of the oppressed. Clever Kautsky persists in an attitude of "opposition," that is, in an attitude derived from Parliamentary warfare. He, indeed, textually says "opposition" (p. 34 and elsewhere). Oh, what a learned historian and politician! It would have done him good to know that "opposition" is a conception belonging to the peaceful and Parliamentary warfare only; that is, a conception corresponding to a non-revolutionary

situation, to a situation marked by an *absence of revolution*. But in time of revolution one has to deal with a ruthless enemy, a party in civil war; and no amount of reactionary lamentations on the part of a petty bourgeois, who is afraid of such a war, as Kautsky is, will alter the fact. To view a ruthless civil war when the bourgeoisie is prepared to commit all sorts of crimes (the example of the Versaillese and their deals with Bismarck must have a meaning for every sane person who does not treat history like a Simple Simon) when the bourgeoisie summons to its assistance foreign States, and intrigues with them against the revolution—to consider such a war from the point of view of Parliamentary "opposition" is simply comical. It would appear that, according to Kautsky the muddlehead, the revolutionary proletariat ought to put on a night-cap and treat the bourgeoisie, which is organising Czecho-Slovak and various Cossack counter-revolutionary insurrections, and which is paying millions to subsidise saboteurs, as a Parliamentary "opposition." What a profound philosophy!

Kautsky is only interested in the formal and legal aspect of the question, and, when reading his disquisitions on the Soviet constitution, one is reminded of Bebel's word that lawyers are all thorough reactionaries. Kautsky, for instance, writes: "In reality the capitalists alone cannot be disfranchised. What are they, in the legal sense of the term? Property owners? Even in a country so far advanced economically as Germany, where the proletariat is so

numerous, the establishment of a Soviet republic would have disfranchised large masses of the people. In 1907, in the German Empire, the number of persons occupied in earning a livelihood for themselves and their families in the three great groups, agriculture, industry, and commerce, amounted roughly to thirty-five million wage earners and salaried employees, and seventeen million independent. Hence a party could well be a majority among the wage earners, but a minority of the population" (p.33).

This is an example of Kautsky's arguments. Is it not the counter-revolutionary whining of a bourgeois? Why have you, Mr. Kautsky, relegated all the independent earners to the class of the disfranchised, when you well know that the overwhelming majority of the Russian peasants do not employ hired labour, and do not, therefore, lose their political rights? Is it not a downright falsification? Why have you not, oh, most learned economist, quoted the facts well known to you, and to be found in the same German statistical return for 1907, relating to hired labour in agriculture according to the size of farms? Why have you not produced for the benefit of the German workers, who are your readers, these facts which would show how very few are exploiters among the total number of "farmers" who figure in the German statistical returns? I will tell you why: because you are a renegade, and have become a sycophant of the bourgeoisie.

"Capitalist," don't you see, is a vague legal term, and Kautsky thunders forth, for the space of several pages, against the "arbitrariness" of the Soviet

constitution. This great scholar permits the British bourgeoisie to elaborate, during several centuries, a new bourgeois constitution, but we, the workers and peasants of Russia, are not to be given any time by this representative of servile science: we must produce a constitution, worked out to the last detail, in the space of a few months!

Arbitrariness! Only think what a depth of meanest subserviency to the bourgeoisie, and of the most idiotic pedantry, is contained in such a reproach. When thoroughly bourgeois and, for the most part, even reactionary jurists of capitalist countries have in the course of, we may almost say, centuries, been drawing up rules and regulations and writing up hundreds of volumes of various codes and laws, and of interpretations of them to oppress the workers, to bind hand and foot the poor man, and to place a hundred and one hindrances and obstacles in the way of the simple and toiling mass of the people—when this is done the bourgeois Liberals and Mr. Kautsky can see no "arbitrariness"! It is all law and order! It has all been thought out and written down, how the poor man is to be kept down and squeezed. There are thousands and thousands of bourgeois lawyers and officials able so to interpret the laws that the worker and average peasant can never break through their barbed wire entanglements. This, of course, is not any arbitrariness; this, of course, is not a dictatorship of the filthy and profit-seeking exploiters who are drinking the blood of the people. Oh, it is nothing of the kind. It is but "pure democracy," which is

becoming purer and purer every day. But when the toiling and exploited masses for the first time in history, separated by an Imperialist war from their brothers across the frontier, have constructed their Soviets, have summoned to the work of political construction the classes which the bourgeoisie used to oppress and to stupefy, and begun themselves to build up a new proletarian State, begun, in the midst of raging battles, in the fire of civil war, to lay down the fundamental principles of a State without exploiters, then all the scoundrels of the bourgeoisie, the entire band of blood-suckers, with Kautsky singing *obbligato*, scream out about arbitrariness! Indeed, how can these workers and peasants, this mob, interpret their own laws? Whence are they to take the sense of justice—they, the common toilers, who are not seeking the assistance of educated lawyers, of bourgeois writers, of the Kautskys, and the wise old bureaucrats?

Mr. Kautsky quotes from my speech of April 28th, 1918, the words: "The masses themselves determine the procedure and the time of elections." And Kautsky, the "pure democrat," infers: "Hence it would seem that every assembly of electors may determine the procedure of elections at their own discretion. Arbitrariness and the chance of getting rid of inconvenient oppositional elements within the ranks of the proletariat itself have thus been brought to a high level of perfection" (p. 37).

What is the difference between these remarks and the usual talk of the capitalist hack journalist who howls about the terrorism exercised in time of strikes

by the men against the "industrious" and "willing" blacklegs? Why is the bureaucratic and bourgeois method of determining the electoral procedure in a purely bourgeois democracy not arbitrariness? Why should the sense of justice be lower among the masses who have risen against their age-long exploiters, and who are being educated and hardened by this desperate struggle, than among the handful of bureaucrats, intellectuals, and lawyers brought up in bourgeois prejudices?

Kautsky is a true Socialist. You must not suspect the sincerity of this most respectable family man, this most honest citizen. He is an ardent believer in the victory of the working class, in the proletarian revolution. He would only have liked that sweetly reasonable Philistines in night-caps should, in advance—that is, before the masses have begun to move, and before they have engaged in raging battles with the exploiters, and certainly without any civil war—have drawn up a nice and model set of rules for the development of the revolution!

Our most learned Tartuffe tells the German workers, with profound indignation, that on June 14th, 1918, the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets decided to exclude from the Soviets the representatives of the Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik parties. "This measure," our Tartuffe says, burning with noble indignation, "is directed not against definite persons guilty of definite punishable offences. . . . The constitution of the Soviet Republic does not mention the inviolability of the Soviet members at all. It is not definite per-

sons, but definite *parties*, that have been excluded from the Soviets" (p. 37).

Indeed, it *is* a most terrible, most intolerable departure from pure democracy, according to whose rules our revolutionary Tartuffe would like to make a revolution. We, Russian Bolsheviks, ought first to have promised inviolability to the Savinkovs and Co., to the Liebers and Dans and Potressovs (so-called "Activists"), then to have drawn up a criminal code proclaiming any participation in the Czecho-Slovak counter-revolutionary war, any alliance with the German Imperialists in the Ukraine or in Georgia, against the workers of the country, to be punishable offences, and then, and only then, on the strength of this criminal code, we should have been justified, according to the principles of the bourgeoisie, in excluding from the Soviets "definite individuals." It goes without saying that the Czecho-Slovaks, who were receiving subsidies from Anglo-French capitalists through the medium, or thanks to the agitation, of the Savinkovs, Potressovs and Liebers, as well as the Krasnovs, who were receiving shells from the Germans through the Ukrainian and Tiflis Mensheviks, would have sat quietly waiting until we were ready with our proper criminal code, and, like the purest democrats, would have confined themselves to the rôle of an "opposition."

No less indignation has been aroused in Kautsky's breast by the fact that the Soviet constitution disfranchises all those who "employ hired labour with a view to profit." "A home worker or a small

master," Kautsky writes, "with one single journeyman, may live and feel quite like a proletarian, but he has no vote!" (p. 36). What a departure from bourgeois "democracy!" What an act of injustice! Up till now all Marxists thought—and proved it by thousands of facts—that the small masters were most unscrupulous exploiters of hired labour, but our Tartuffe takes not the *class* of small masters, of course (why keep on always recalling the mischievous theory of class war?), but *single* individuals, *single* exploiters, who "live and feel like proletarians." The famous "thrifty Agnes," who was thought to have been long dead, is risen to life again under Kautsky's pen. This "thrifty Agnes" was invented and set going in German literature a score of years ago by that "pure" democrat, the bourgeois Liberal, Eugen Richter. He was predicting untold calamities from the dictatorship of the proletariat, from the confiscation of the capital of the exploiters, and used to ask, with an innocent air, who was a capitalist in the legal sense of the term? He took as an example the poor, thrifty seamstress, the "thrifty Agnes," who was robbed of her last coppers by the evil-minded proletarian dictators. There was a time when all German Social-Democracy was poking fun at this "thrifty Agnes" of the pure democrat, Eugen Richter. But this was a long, long time ago, when Bebel was still living, who used to tell the truth publicly that there was a large number of National-Liberals in the Socialist ranks; and when Kautsky was not yet a renegade.

But now "thrifty Agnes" has again come to life, in the person of the "small master, living and feeling like a proletarian," and employing "only one" journeyman. The evil-minded Bolsheviks are hurting him, are taking away from him his vote! It is true that any electoral assembly, as Kautsky tells us, may, in the Soviet Republic, admit into its midst a poor "little master" who, for instance, may be connected with this or that factory, if, by way of an exception, he is not an exploiter, and lives and feels like a proletarian. But can one rely upon the knowledge of actual conditions, upon the sense of justice of a factory meeting of common workers who are acting without a written code? Is it not clear that it is preferable to grant the vote to all exploiters, to all those who employ hired labour, than to risk doing wrong in respect of a "thrifty Agnes" and a "small master living and feeling like a proletarian"?

* * *

Let the contemptible scoundrels of apostasy abuse, amidst the applause of the bourgeoisie and the Social Chauvinists,* our Soviet constitution for disfranchising the exploiters. This is good, because it will accelerate and deepen the split between the revolutionary workers of Europe and the Scheide-

*I have just read a leader in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, of October 22nd, 1918, enthusiastically reviewing Kautsky's pamphlet. The organ of the Stock Exchange is satisfied, and no wonder. At the same time a comrade writes to me from Berlin that *Vorwärts*, the organ of the Scheidemannites, has stated in a special article that it subscribes to almost every line of Kautsky. We congratulate Kautsky heartily. [A similar review has appeared in *The Times*.—Trans.]

manns and Kautskys, the Renaudels and Longuets, the Hendersons and MacDonalds, and all the old leaders and old traitors of Socialism. The masses of the oppressed, the class-conscious and honest leaders of the revolutionary proletariat, will be *with* us. Such proletarians and such masses will only have to peruse our Soviet constitution and they will at once say: Here are our real men; here is a real labour party; here is a real workers' government, for it has not gulled the workers by talk about revolutions, as we used to be gulled by those leaders, and is really waging a war against the exploiters, is really carrying on a revolution, is really fighting for the complete emancipation of the working class!

If the exploiters have been disfranchised by the Soviets after twelve months' experience, it means that the Soviets are really organisations of the oppressed masses, and not organisations of Social Imperialists and Social Pacifists, who have sold themselves to the bourgeoisie. If the Soviets have disfranchised the exploiters, it means that they are not organs of petty bourgeois compromise with the capitalists, not parliamentary talking-shops after the heart of the Kautskys and the MacDonalds, but the organs of a real revolutionary proletariat who are waging a life-and-death struggle against the exploiters.

"Kautsky's pamphlet is almost unknown here," a well-informed comrade has written to me from Berlin a couple of days ago (to-day is October 30th). I should advise our ambassadors in Germany and Switzerland not to stint money in buying up this

book and in distributing it gratis among the class-conscious workers, in order to trample in the mud the so-called European—that is, the Imperialist and reformist—Social-Democracy, which has long become a whited sepulchre.

* * *

At the end of his book, on pages 61 and 63, Mr. Kautsky laments over the fact that "the new theory" (as he calls Bolshevism, in his fear even to approach the analysis of the Commune of Paris made by Marx and Engels) "finds supporters even in old democracies, like, for instance, Switzerland." Kautsky finds it unintelligible "how this theory could also be adopted by German Social-Democrats."

No; it is quite intelligible, as the revolutionary masses, after the serious lessons of the war, are getting sick of the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys.

"We" have always been in favour of democracy—Kautsky writes—and all of a sudden we are asked to renounce it! Yes, "we," the opportunists of Social-Democracy, have always been against the dictatorship of the proletariat, and Kolb and Co. proclaimed this long ago. Kautsky knows it, and it is futile for him to imagine that he can hide from the readers the obvious fact of his return to the fold of the Bernsteins and Kolbs.

But "we," *revolutionary Marxists*, never advised the people to worship so-called "pure"—that is, bourgeois—democracy. In 1903, as is well known, Plekhanov was still a revolutionary Marxist (up to the time when he took the wrong turning which

brought him to the position of a Russian Scheidemann). Plekhanov in that year declared at the congress of our party, which was at that time drawing up its programme, that in the revolution the proletariat would, if necessary, disfranchise the capitalists and suppress any parliament if it should turn out counter-revolutionary. That this view is alone in agreement with Marxism will be clear to anybody from the statements by Marx and Engels which I have quoted above. In fact, it directly follows from all the fundamental principles of Marxism.

"We," revolutionary Marxists, never spoke to the people in the manner beloved of the Kautskians of all nations, who are fond of acting the flunkey to the bourgeoisie, of adapting themselves to the bourgeois parliament, and of keeping discreet silence as to the bourgeois character of modern democracy, and only demanding its extension to the extreme limit.

"We" used to say to the bourgeoisie: You, exploiters and hypocrites, you talk of democracy while placing at every step a thousand and one barriers to prevent the oppressed masses from taking part in politics. We take you at your word, and demand in the interests of those masses the extension of your bourgeois democracy, in order to prepare the masses for revolution, for your overthrow. And if you, exploiters, should attempt to offer resistance to our proletarian revolution we shall ruthlessly suppress you; we shall deprive you of your rights, and, even more, we shall not give you any bread,

because in our proletarian republic the exploiters will lose their rights, will be deprived of fire and water, as we are Socialists in real earnest, and not in a Scheidemann or Kautskian fashion.

This is how we spoke and shall speak—"we," revolutionary Marxists—and this is why the oppressed masses will be for us and with us, while the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys will be swept into a renegades' dust-hole.

CHAPTER VII

WHAT IS INTERNATIONALISM?

KAUTSKY is most decidedly convinced of his Internationalism, and calls himself an Internationalist, while dubbing the Scheidemannites "Government Socialists." But when defending the Mensheviks (Kautsky does not publicly confess his solidarity with them, but reflects their views to the last detail), Kautsky has shown in a most instructive manner the sort of Internationalism which he prefers; and since Kautsky is not an individual aberration, but a representative of his school, which inevitably grew up in the atmosphere of the Second International (Longuet in France, Turati In Italy, Nobs and Grimm, Graber and Nain in Switzerland, Ramsay MacDonald in England, and so forth), it will be instructive to dwell a little on Kautsky's Internationalism.

After pointing out that the Mensheviks had also attended the Zimmerwald Conference (a diploma of rather doubtful validity now), Kautsky sets out in the following manner the views of the Mensheviks, with whom he agrees: "The Mensheviks wanted a general peace. They wanted all the belligerents to adopt the formula: No annexations, no indemnities. Until this had been achieved the Russian army was, according to this view, to stand fully prepared for battle. The Bolsheviks, on the

other hand, demanded an immediate peace at any price; they were prepared, if need be, to make a separate peace; they endeavoured to extort it by force, by increasing the disorganisation of the army, which was great even without their efforts" (p. 27). In Kautsky's opinion the Bolsheviks ought not to have taken over the power in the State, and ought to have contented themselves with the Constituent Assembly.

The Internationalism of Kautsky and the Mensheviks is, therefore, this: To demand reforms from the Imperialist bourgeois Government, but to continue to support it, and to continue to support the war carried on by this Government until such time as all belligerents had accepted the formula: No annexations, no indemnities. Such a view was repeatedly expressed by Turati and by the Kautskians (Haase and others), and Longuet and Co., who used to add that they were for the defence of their respective fatherlands.

From a theoretical point of view, this is a complete inability to dissociate oneself from the Social Chauvinists and a complete muddle on the question of the defence of the fatherland. From the political point of view it is a substitution of petty bourgeois nationalism in the place of Internationalism, and a desertion to the reformists' camp, a renunciation of the revolution.

The recognition of the defence of the fatherland is a justification, from the point of view of the proletariat, of the present war, the admission of its lawfulness. And since the war remains Imperialist

both under Monarchy and Republic, irrespectively of the territory—mine or the enemies'—occupied at the given moment by the enemy troops, the recognition of the defence of the fatherland is, in point of fact, tantamount to the support of the Imperialist predatory bourgeoisie, to a complete betrayal of Socialism. The war continued to be Imperialist in Russia even under Kerensky, under the bourgeois democratic republic, since it was being carried on by the bourgeoisie in the position of a ruling class (war, it must be remembered, is a continuation of politics); and the most characteristic mark of the Imperialist character of the war was the secret treaties relating to the partition of the world and violation of other people's countries, which had been made by the ex-Tsar with the capitalists of England and France.

The Mensheviks were unscrupulously deceiving the people by calling this war a defensive or revolutionary war; and Kautsky, when approving the policy of the Mensheviks, is approving the deception practised on the people, is approving the part played by the petty bourgeois in helping Capitalism to trick the workers and to harness them to the chariot of the Imperialists. Kautsky is advocating a characteristically bourgeois and Philistine-like policy, imagining (and trying to instil into the minds of the masses the absurd idea) that a watchword can alter the real position of affairs. The entire history of bourgeois democracy refutes this illusion, since the bourgeois democrats have always put forward all sorts of attractive watchwords to deceive the people. What

is necessary is to test their sincerity, to compare their deeds with their words, to discard the idealistic charlatan phrases, and to seek for the *class actuality*. An Imperialist war does not cease to be Imperialist through the mere fact that charlatans or phrasemongers or Philistines put forward and proclaim attractive watchwords. It ceases to be such only when the class which carries on the Imperialist war, and which is connected with it by millions of economic threads (in some cases ropes), is overthrown and is replaced at the helm by the really revolutionary class, the proletariat. There is no other way of getting out of an Imperialist war, or of the necessarily following Imperialist predatory peace.

By approving the foreign policy of the Mensheviks, and declaring it to have been Internationalist and Zimmerwaldian, Kautsky, first, proves thereby the hollowness of the opportunist Zimmerwaldian majority (from which we, the *Left* Zimmerwaldians, at once dissociated ourselves), and, secondly,—and this is the most important thing—Kautsky passes from the position of the proletariat to that of the petty bourgeoisie, from the revolutionary to the reformist position.

The proletariat fights for the revolutionary overthrow of the Imperialist bourgeoisie, while the petty bourgeois fights for a reformist "improvement" of Imperialism, for adaptation and submission to it. When Kautsky was still a Marxist (for instance, in March, 1909, when he was writing his *Path to Power*), he was insisting upon the inevitability of a revolution in connection with the war, and spoke

about the approach of an era of revolutions. The Basel Manifesto of 1912 definitely speaks of a *proletarian* revolution in connection with that very Imperialist war between the Germans and the British Coalition, which actually broke out in 1914. But in 1918, when these revolutions began in connection with the war, Kautsky, instead of pointing out their inevitable character and reflecting upon and thinking out to the end the revolutionary policy and the methods of preparing for revolution, sets out to represent the reformist tactics of the Mensheviks as Internationalism. Is not this a piece of apostasy?

Kautsky praises the Mensheviks for having insisted upon efficiency in the army, and he blames the Bolsheviks for having increased the disorganisation of the army, which had been growing even without their intervention. This means praising reformism and submission to the Imperialist bourgeoisie, blaming the revolution and abjuring it. For the maintenance of the fighting efficiency of the army meant, under Kerensky, its maintenance under the bourgeois (albeit republican) command. Everybody knows, and the events have proved it, that this republican army was preserving what may be called a Kornilov spirit, thanks to the reactionary attitude of the command. The bourgeois officers could not help being of a Kornilov spirit; they could not help gravitating towards Imperialism and towards a forcible suppression of the proletariat. To leave as before all the foundations of the Imperialist war, all the foundations of bourgeois dictatorship intact, to correct details and to improve the little minor defects

by means of so-called reforms—this is what, in practice, the Menshevik policy amounted to.

On the other hand, not a single great revolution ever did or could do without a so-called disorganisation of the army, the strongest instrument of support of the old régime; since the army is the most hardened bulwark of bourgeois discipline, of the rule of capitalism, of the maintenance and the strengthening of servile submissiveness and subjection of the toiling masses to capitalist domination. The Counter-Revolution never tolerated, and never could tolerate, armed workers side by side with the army. Engels wrote, that in France after each revolution the workers were found to be armed: "Hence the first commandment in the eyes of the bourgeoisie, on seizing the helm of the State, was to disarm the workers." The armed workers were the germ of a *new* army, and the nucleus of organisation of a *new* social order. For this reason the first act of the bourgeoisie was to crush this germ, to prevent it from growing. On the other hand, the first commandment of every triumphant revolution, as Marx and Engels repeatedly pointed out, was to smash up this old army and replace it by a new one. The new social class struggling for supremacy never could (and still cannot) attain such supremacy or consolidate it except by dissolving the old army ("disorganising it," as the reactionary or cowardly Philistines invariably howl), except by passing through a most difficult and painful period of absence of any army (as was the case also with the French revolution) and by forging, in the midst of terrible civil

war, a new army and a discipline and military organisation of a new class. In the old days Kautsky, the historian, knew it, but now Kautsky, the renegade, has forgotten it.

By what right does Kautsky dub the Scheidemannites "Government Socialists," when he approves of the policy of the Mensheviks in the Russian revolution? By supporting Kerensky and by participating in his Ministry, the Mensheviks were also Government Socialists. Kautsky will not escape this conclusion, if only he asks what was the ruling class which was waging the Imperialist war. But Kautsky avoids raising this question, which must be put by every Marxist, since by doing so he would have proved himself a renegade.

The Kautskians of Germany, the Longuetists of France, the Turatis in Italy, reason in this way: Socialism implies the equality and freedom of nationalities, their self-determination; hence, when our country is attacked or invaded by enemy troops, the Socialists are justified and under an obligation to defend it. But such reasoning from a theoretical standpoint is either a hollow mockery of Socialism or a tricky manœuvre, and, from the point of view of practical politics, is no better than the reasoning of the most backward and ignorant peasant who cannot even reflect upon the social, the *class* character of the war, and on the duties of a reactionary party in time of a reactionary war.

Certainly Socialism is opposed to violation of the rights of nationality. But Socialism is altogether opposed to violence against man; yet, apart from

Christian Anarchists and Tolstoyans, no one has as yet drawn the conclusion from this proposition that Socialism is opposed to *revolutionary* violence. Hence, to talk about violence in general, without examining the conditions distinguishing reactionary from revolutionary violence, is to abjure the revolution or to deceive oneself and others by sophisms.

The same holds good about violence against nations. Every war implies violence against nations, but that does not prevent the Socialists from being in favour of a *revolutionary* war. The class character of the war—that is the fundamental question which confronts a Socialist who is not a renegade. The Imperialist war of 1914-18 is a war between two coalitions of the imperialist bourgeoisie for the partition of the world, for the division of booty, and for the strangulation and spoliation of small and weak nationalities. Such was the view of the war which was given in 1912 by the Basel Manifesto, which has since been confirmed by facts. He who abandons this point of view is not a Socialist, and if a German, under Wilhelm, or a Frenchman, under Clémenceau, says: I am justified, and, indeed, it is my duty as a Socialist to defend my country if it is invaded by an enemy; he reasons not as a Socialist, not as an Internationalist, not as a revolutionary proletarian, but as a *bourgeois nationalist*. For this reasoning leaves out of sight the revolutionary class-struggle of the workers against capitalism, and abandons all attempt at appraising the war as a *whole* from the point of view of the world-bourgeoisie and the world-prole-

tariat; that is, discards Internationalism and adopts a miserable and narrow-minded nationalist standpoint. My country is being invaded, all the rest does not concern me—this is what such reasoning amounts to, and this is why it is bourgeois-nationalist narrow-mindedness. It is the same as if somebody, confronted by an individual outrage, were to reason: Socialism is opposed to outrage; therefore I prefer to be a traitor rather than to go to prison. The Frenchman, the German, or Italian who says: "Socialism is opposed to outrage on nations; therefore I defend myself when my country is invaded"—this man is *betraying* Socialism and Internationalism, since he only thinks of his own country, places above all his bourgeoisie, without reflecting upon the international connections which make the war an *Imperialist* war, and his bourgeoisie a link in the chain of Imperialist brigandage. All Philistines and "yokels" reason just like these renegades, the Kautskys, the Longuets, the Turatis: "My country is invaded and I do not care about anything else."*

As against these, the Socialist, the revolutionary

*The Social-Chauvinists (the Scheidemanns, Renaudels, Hendersons, Gomperses) refuse altogether to talk about Internationalism during the war, and regard the enemies of their respective bourgeoisies as "traitors to Socialism." They are in favour of the predatory policy of their respective bourgeoisies. The Social Pacifists, on the other hand, that is, those who are socialists in words and bourgeois pacifists in practice, proclaim all sorts of internationalist sentiments, protest against annexations, etc., but in practice continue to support their respective bourgeoisies. The difference between the two types is not profound. It is like the difference between two capitalists—one with rude, and the other with sweet words on his lips.

proletarian, the Internationalist, reasons differently. He says: The character of the war (whether reactionary or revolutionary) does not depend upon who was the aggressor, or on whose territory the enemy is standing. It depends on *what class* is carrying on the war, and what is the politics of which the war is a continuation. If the war is a reactionary Imperialist war, that is, is being waged by two world-coalitions of the Imperialist predatory bourgeoisie, then every bourgeoisie, even of the smallest country, becomes a participant in the brigandage, and my duty as representative of the revolutionary proletariat is to prepare the *world-proletarian revolution* as the only escape from the horrors of the world-war. In other words, I must reason, not from the point of view of "my" country (for this is the reasoning of a poor stupid nationalist Philistine who does not realise that he is only a plaything in the hands of the Imperialist bourgeoisie), but from the point of view of *my share* in the preparation, in the propaganda, and in the acceleration of a world-proletarian revolution.

This is what Internationalism is, and this is the duty of the international revolutionary worker, of the genuine Socialist. But Kautsky the renegade has "forgotten" this elementary truth, and his apostasy becomes still more palpable when he passes from the approval of the tactics of the petty bourgeois nationalists (the Mensheviks in Russia, the Longuetists in France, the Turatis in Italy, and the Haases and others in Germany), to a criticism of the Bolshevik tactics. This is what he says:—

"The Bolshevik revolution was based on the supposition that it would become the starting point of a general European revolution, that the bold initiative of Russia would arouse the proletarians of all Europe to an insurrection. From this point of view it was, of course, immaterial what forms the Russo-German separate peace would assume, what hardships or mutilations it would bring to the Russian people, and what interpretation of the self-determination of nations it would give. It was also immaterial whether Russia was able, or not, to defend herself. The European revolution would be the best protection of the Russian revolution, and would bring complete and genuine self-determination to all the nationalities on the former Russian territory. A revolution in Europe which would have established there a Socialist order was also to become the means of removing those obstacles which were placed in Russia by the economic backwardness of the country to the realisation of Socialist production. . . . This was all very logical, and was very well thought out. It was only conditioned by one assumption, namely, that the Russian revolution would necessarily let loose a European one. But how if it did not happen? So far the assumption has not been justified, and the proletariat of Europe is now being accused of having abandoned and betrayed the Russian revolution. This is an accusation levelled against unknown persons, since who could be made responsible for the behaviour of the European proletariat?" (p. 28).

Kautsky then goes on to repeat again and again

that Marx and Engels and Bebel were more than once wrong in their prediction of the forthcoming revolutions, but that they never were basing their tactics on the expectation of a revolution at a "precise date" (p. 29), whereas, forsooth, the Bolsheviks have "staked everything on the one card of a general European revolution."

We have purposely quoted this long passage in order to show the reader how cleverly Kautsky mimics Marxism by palming off under its guise the reactionary platitudes of a bourgeois.

First, he ascribes to his opponent an obvious absurdity, and then he refutes it. This is the method of not over-clever people. If the Bolsheviks were really basing their tactics on the expectation of a revolution in other countries at a *given date*, it would certainly be a great folly. But the Bolshevik party has never been guilty of that. In my letter to the American workers on August 20th, 1918, I expressly repudiated such folly, saying that we were counting on an American revolution, but *not* by any given date. The same idea was more than once propounded by me in my controversy with the Left Social Revolutionaries and the Left Communists in January and March, 1918. Kautsky has committed a little forgery, on which he has based his criticism of Bolshevism. Kautsky has confounded a policy which counts on a European revolution, in a more or less near future date, with a policy relying upon a European revolution on a *precise* date. A little forgery, nothing more.

The last-named policy would have been a folly,

but the first-named is obligatory on all Marxists and all revolutionary proletarians and Internationalists, because it alone takes proper and correct account, in a Marxist way, of the objective situation in all European countries which has been brought about by the war, and alone corresponds to the international duties of the proletariat. By substituting for the important question about the premises of revolutionary tactics in general the petty question about an error which the Bolshevik revolutionaries might have made, but *did not*, Kautsky has abjured all revolutionary policy. A renegade in practical politics, he has not been able, even in theory, to put the question about the objective prerequisites of a revolutionary policy properly.

But here we have come up to the second point.

Second, it is the duty of every Marxist to count on a European revolution, if the situation is revolutionary in tendency. It is an elementary axiom of Marxism that the policy of the Socialist proletariat must be different when the situation is revolutionary and when it is not. If Kautsky had put to himself this question, which is obligatory for every Marxist, he would have seen that the answer was absolutely against him. Long before the war, *all* Marxists, *all* Socialists, were agreed that the European war would bring about a revolutionary situation. Kautsky himself, before he became a renegade, expressly and clearly admitted it, both in 1902 (in his *Social Revolution*), and in 1909 (in his *Path to Power*). It was also proclaimed, in the name of the entire Second International, by the Basel Mani-

festo, and it is therefore not without reason that the Social Chauvinists and the Kautskians ("the men of the Centre," that is, those who are constantly oscillating between the revolutionists and the opportunists), of all countries are mortally afraid of the declarations of the Basel Manifesto on the subject. Hence, the expectation of a revolutionary situation in Europe was not an infatuation of the Bolsheviks, but the *common* opinion of all Marxists. When Kautsky tries to escape from this undoubted truth with the help of such phrases as that the Bolsheviks "always believed in the omnipotence of force and will," he simply utters a sonorous and empty phrase to cover up his disgraceful failure to put the important question about the revolutionary situation.

Further, has that revolutionary situation really supervened or not? This question, too, Kautsky has not been able to face. The economic facts of the situation are a sufficient answer: famine and ruin, brought about by the war everywhere, mean a revolutionary situation. The political facts also constitute a good answer to the question: ever since 1915 a scission has been taking place in all countries among the old and foul Socialist parties, a process of *desertion of the masses* of the proletariat from the Social Chauvinist camp to the Left, to the ideas and moods of revolution, and the revolutionary leaders.

Only a person afraid of revolution, and betraying it, could have failed to note these facts on August 5th, 1918, when Kautsky was writing his pamphlet. And now, at the end of October, 1918, the revolution is growing in a number of European countries, very

rapidly and under our very eyes. Kautsky, the "revolutionary," who wants to be still regarded as a Marxist, has shown himself to be a short-sighted Philistine, unable to see the approaching revolution, like those Philistines of 1847, who were so pitilessly derided by Marx.

And here we come up to the third point: what are to be the peculiarities of a revolutionary policy at the time of a European revolutionary situation? Kautsky, having become a renegade, was too timid to ask this question, which is obligatory for every Marxist. Kautsky reasons like a typical Philistine: Has a general European revolution broken out or not? If it has, then he also is prepared to become a revolutionary. But then, we may observe, every scoundrel (after the manner of those who are now trying to ingratiate themselves with the victorious Bolsheviks) would be prepared to proclaim himself a revolutionary. But if the revolution has not arrived, Kautsky will turn away his face from it. Kautsky has no understanding at all of that truth that a revolutionary Marxist is distinguished from the ordinary Philistine by his ability and willingness to preach to the still ignorant masses the necessity of the approaching revolution, to prove its inevitableness, to explain its advantage to the people, and to prepare for it the proletariat and all the toiling and exploited masses.

Kautsky has attributed to the Bolsheviks an absurdity by saying that they had staked everything on the card that a European revolution would break out by a given date. This absurdity has turned

against Kautsky himself, because what he implied was this: the tactics of the Bolsheviks would have been correct if a European revolution had broken out by August 5th, 1918, on which date, as Kautsky tells us, he was writing his pamphlet. But since, a few weeks after this August 5th, it became clear that a revolution was approaching in a number of European countries, the whole apostasy of Kautsky, his whole method of falsifying Marxism, and all his inability to reason revolutionarily, or even to put the question in a revolutionary manner, have been exhibited in all their nakedness.

When the proletarians of Europe are accused of treachery, Kautsky writes, it is an accusation against unknown persons. You are mistaken, Mr. Kautsky. Look in the glass, and you will see these "unknown persons" against whom the accusation is levelled. Kautsky assumes an air of innocence, and pretends not to understand who it is that has levelled the accusation, and what is its meaning. In reality Kautsky knows perfectly well that the accusation has been and is being still levelled by the German Left, by the Spartacists, by Liebknecht, and his friends. The accusation means that the German proletariat was committing a betrayal of the Russian, as well as of the international, revolution, when it was strangling Finland, the Ukraine, Latvia, and Esthonia. This accusation is directed chiefly and above all, not against the masses, who are always downtrodden, but against those *leaders* who, like the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, were failing in their duty of revolutionary agitation and revolutionary

work among the masses in combating their inertness, who were practically working against the revolutionary instincts and aspirations ever aglow in the depths of the hearts of the oppressed classes. The Scheidemanns were betraying the proletariat and deserting to the bourgeoisie, openly, grossly, cynically, and, for the most part, for corrupt motives. The Kautskys and the Longuets were doing the same thing, only in a hesitating and halting manner, casting cowardly side glances at those who might be strongest at the particular moment. Kautsky throughout the war was *putting out* the revolutionary spirit, instead of maintaining and fanning it.

It will remain an historical monument of the "Philistinisation" of the "average" leader of the German Official Social-Democracy that Kautsky does not even understand what an enormous theoretical importance, and what a still greater importance from the point of view of agitation and propaganda, lies in the "accusation" of the proletarians of Europe that they were betraying the Russian revolution. Kautsky does not understand that owing to the censorship prevailing in Germany this "accusation" is almost the only form in which the German Socialists who have not betrayed Socialism, that is Liebknecht and his friends, could clothe their appeal to the German workers to throw off the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, to emancipate themselves from their soporific and vulgar propaganda, to rise *in spite of them* and march *over their heads* towards revolution.

Kautsky does not understand all this. How is he

to understand the policy of the Bolsheviks? Can one expect a person who is renouncing the revolution to weigh and to appraise the conditions of the development of the revolution in an exceedingly difficult case? The tactics of the Bolsheviks were correct; they were the only internationalist tactics, since they were based not on the cowardly fear of a world revolution, not on a Philistine lack of faith in it, not on the narrow nationalist desire to protect "one's own" fatherland (that is, the fatherland of one's own bourgeoisie), and to snap one's fingers at all the rest, but on a correct (and *universally admitted*, before the war and before the treachery of the Social Chauvinists and Social Pacifists) estimation of the revolutionary situation in Europe. These tactics were the only internationalist tactics, because they contributed the maximum impetus possible for any single country to give to the development, maintenance and awakening of the revolution in all *countries*. These tactics have been justified by their enormous success because Bolshevism (not at all owing to the merits of the Russian Bolsheviks, but owing to the most profound sympathy of the masses with a policy which is revolutionary in practice) has become a world-Bolshevism, and is giving to the world an idea, a theory, a programme, and a policy, which practically and concretely differ from those of Social-pacifism and Social-Chauvinism. Bolshevism has finally disposed of the old foul Internationalism of the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Renaudels and Longuets, the Hendersons and MacDonalds, who will henceforth be stumbling against

one another in their vain dreams of unity and of reviving a corpse. Bolshevism has *created* the theoretical and tactical foundations of a Third International, a really proletarian and Communist International, which will take into consideration both the conquests of the peaceful period and the experience of the revolutionary period which has now begun.

Bolshevism has popularised throughout the world the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat, has translated the words from the Latin, first into Russian, and then into all the languages of the world, by showing, by the living example of the Soviet régime, that the workers and poorer peasantry, even of a backward country, even with the least experience and education and habits of organisation, have been able for a whole year, amidst gigantic difficulties and amidst the continuance of the fight against the exploiters (supported by the bourgeoisie of the entire world), to maintain the authority of the labouring masses, to create a democracy higher than all the previous democracies of the world, and to begin, by scores of millions of workers and peasants, the constructive work for the practical realisation of Socialism.

Bolshevism has helped in a practical manner to further proletarian revolution in Europe and America in such a way as no party has ever succeeded in doing anywhere before. While the workers of the entire world are realising more and more clearly that the policy of the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys is not calculated to free them from the Imperialist war and from wage slavery under the

Imperialist bourgeoisie, and that this policy cannot serve as model for any country, they at the same time realise more and more that Bolshevism has shown the right way to escape from the horrors of war and imperialism, and is suitable as *a model of tactics for all.* Not only the European, but also the universal world proletarian revolution is maturing under everybody's eyes, and it has been assisted, has been accelerated, has been supported, by the victory of the proletariat in Russia. Is all that enough for a complete victory of Socialism? Certainly not. One country cannot do more, but this one country, thanks to the Soviet régime, has nevertheless achieved so much that even if the Soviet régime were crushed by World Imperialism, by way, for instance, of an agreement between the German and the Anglo-French Imperialism—even in this worst possible case, the Bolshevik policy would still have brought a gigantic benefit to Socialism, and would have rendered the greatest assistance to the growth of the invincible world revolution.

CHAPTER VIII.

SUBSERVIENCY TO THE BOURGEOISIE IN THE GUISE OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS.

AS I have said already, Kautsky's book ought to have been called, if the title had faithfully reflected its contents, *Variations on the bourgeoisie attacks against the Bolsheviks*, and not *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat.*

The old Menshevik theories about the bourgeois character of the Russian revolution—that is, the old misinterpretation of Marxism by the Mensheviks which was rejected by Kautsky in 1905—are now once more warmed up by our theoretician. However tedious the process may be for Russian Marxists, we must stop to dwell upon this subject.

The Russian revolution would be a bourgeois revolution, so said all the Marxists in Russia before 1905. The Mensheviks, however, adulterated Marxism by Liberalism, in that they reasoned therefrom that the proletariat must not go beyond what was acceptable to the bourgeoisie, and must pursue a policy of compromise with it. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, argued that that was a bourgeois Liberal theory. The bourgeoisie, they said, was trying to effect a change of the State on bourgeois, on reformist, not on revolutionary lines, by preserving, so far as possible, the monarchy,

landlordism, etc. The proletariat must not allow itself to be crippled by the reformism of the bourgeoisie, but must carry through the bourgeois democratic revolution to the end. As for the class correlation of strength in the time of a bourgeois revolution, the Bolsheviks gave the following formula: The proletariat, by gaining the adhesion of the peasantry, would neutralise the Liberal bourgeoisie, and would raze to the ground the monarchy, landlordism, and all the survivals of the Middle Ages. The *bourgeois* character of the revolution will be manifested precisely in this alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry as a whole, since the peasantry as a whole consists of small producers who adhere to the system of commodity production. Subsequently, the Bolshevists were arguing further, the proletariat would ally with itself the semi-proletariat (that is, all those who are exploited and toil), would neutralise the middle peasantry and would overthrow the bourgeoisie: this would be the Socialist revolution, as distinguished from the bourgeois democratic revolution (see my pamphlet: *The Two Tactics*, issued in 1905, and reprinted at Petrograd in 1907, in the collected volume: *Twelve Years*.)

Kautsky took an indirect share in this discussion in 1905, in connection with the symposium got up by Plekhanov, then a Menshevik, and expressed the opinion which, on the main issue, was directed against Plekhanov. This provoked at the time a particular ridicule of the Bolshevik press. But now Kautsky does not even hint at those old discussions

for fear of being exposed to ridicule by his own statements, and thereby deprives the German reader of any chance of gaining an insight into the gist of the matter. Indeed, Mr. Kautsky cannot well tell the German workers in 1918 that in 1905 he had been in favour of an alliance of the workers with the peasants, and not with the Liberal bourgeoisie, and on what conditions he advocated such an alliance, and what a programme he had been proposing for it.

Having withdrawn from his old position, Kautsky, in the guise of an "economic analysis," with proud words about "historical materialism," is now advocating the subjection of the workers to the bourgeoisie, chewing, with the help of quotations from the Menshevik Maslov, the cud of the old Liberal views of the Mensheviks, the quotations serving the purpose of proving the brand-new idea about the backwardness of Russia, and helping to draw from this brand-new idea the old deduction that the proletariat in time of a bourgeois revolution must not go beyond the bourgeoisie. And this in the teeth of all that Marx and Engels said when comparing the bourgeois revolution in France, in 1789-93, with the bourgeois revolution in Germany in 1848!

Before taking up the chief "argument" and the leading ideas of the so-called "economic analysis," let me point out that the very first sentences in Kautsky's disquisition show a curious confusion, or superficiality, of thought. Our sage says: "Agriculture, and, to be more precise, small peasant production, has hitherto been the economic founda-

tion of Russia. About 4/5ths, and even perhaps 5/6ths of the population live by it" (p.45).

First of all, most respected theoretician, have you reflected upon how many exploiters there might be among this mass of small producers? Of course, not more than 10 per cent. of the total number, and in towns still less, because production on a large scale is more highly developed there. Take even an incredibly high figure, and suppose that 20 per cent. of the small producers are exploiters, who, therefore, lose their franchise You will then arrive at the fact that the 66 per cent. majority of Bolsheviks at the fifth Congress of the Soviets were representing the *majority* of the population. To this must be added that a considerable section among the Left Social Revolutionaries were in favour of the Soviet régime, and when a section of them raised, in July, 1918, the adventurous banner of an insurrection, two new parties split away from them, the so-called "Populist Communists" and the "Revolutionary Communists," consisting of prominent Social-Revolutionaries whom the old party had been putting forward for important posts in the Government, as, for instance, Gacks, and Kolegayev respectively. Hence Kautsky has himself unwittingly refuted the ridiculous story of the Bolsheviks being supported only by a minority of the population.

Second, my dear theoretician, has it ever occurred to you that the small peasant producer inevitably oscillates between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie? This Marxist truth, borne out by the entire modern history of Europe, has been very conveni-

ently "forgotten" by Kautsky, as it destroys the entire Menshevik theory which he is so fond of repeating. If Kautsky had still remembered it, he could not have denied the need for a proletarian dictatorship in a country in which the small peasant producer is predominant.

Let us examine the chief propositions of the "economic analysis" of our theoretician. That the Soviet authority is a dictatorship, admits of no doubt—so Kautsky says. "But is it a dictatorship of the proletariat? (p. 34). The peasants, according to the Soviet constitution, form the majority of that population which is entitled to a share in the legislation and administration. What has been offered to us as a dictatorship of the proletariat, if carried out consistently, and if, generally speaking, one single class could directly exercise a dictatorship which in reality can only be exercised by a party, would turn out to be a dictatorship of the *peasantry!*" (pp. 34 and 35). And, elated over such profound and clever reasoning, our good-natured Kautsky even attempts to be humorous and remarks: "It appears, therefore, that the most painless realisation of Socialism is best secured by its capitulation to the peasants" (p. 35).

Our theoretician then proceeds to argue in great detail, on the strength of most learned quotations from the semi-Liberal Maslov, about the interest which peasants have in high corn prices, in a lower wage rate in the towns, etc., etc.—all brand-new ideas which are set out the more tediously as but little attention is paid to the really new phenomena

of the post-war period, such as that the peasants demand for their bread, not money, but goods, and that they lack the necessary agricultural implements which cannot be obtained in sufficient quantities for any money. But of this more anon.

Kautsky then charges the Bolsheviks, the party of the proletariat, with having surrendered the dictatorship and the work of carrying out Socialism into the hands of the small bourgeois peasantry. Excellent, Mr. Kautsky! But what, in your enlightened opinion, ought to have been the attitude of the proletarian party towards the small bourgeois peasantry? Our theoretician, bearing in mind that silence is golden, prefers not to say anything on the subject, but gives himself away by the following statement: "At the beginning of the Soviet Republic the peasants' Soviets were organisations of the peasantry as *a whole*. But now the Soviet Republic proclaims that the Soviets are organisations of the proletariat and the poorer peasantry. The well-to-do peasants are thus disfranchised from the Soviets. The poor peasant is declared to be the permanent and wholesale product of the Socialist agrarian reform under the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat" (p. 48).

What a deadly irony! It can be heard from the lips of any bourgeois in Russia! They all mock and sarcastically note that the Soviet Republic openly admits the existence of the poorest peasantry. They laugh at Socialism; but this is their right. But a "Socialist" who laughs at the idea that after a most ruinous four years' war there should remain in

Russia (and would remain yet for a long time) poor peasants—such a Socialist could only have been born at a time of wholesale apostasy.

Listen further: "The Soviet Rupublic interferes in the relations between the rich and poor peasants, but not by way of a new distribution of land. In order to relieve the scarcity of corn in the towns, detachments of workers are sent into the villages where they take away all surplus stocks from the richer peasants. Part of that stock is distributed among the town population, the other part among the poor peasants" (p. 48).

Of course, Kautsky, the Socialist and the Marxist, is deeply revolted at the idea that such a measure should be extended beyond the neighbourhood of large towns (it does extend with us over the entire country). With the matchless and delicious coolness (or pig-headedness) of a Philistine, Kautsky, the Socialist and Marxist, moralises as follows: "They" (the expropriations of well-to-do peasants) "introduce a new element of uneasiness and civil war into the process of production" (a civil war which has been introduced into the process of production—this is something supernatural!) "which for its recovery urgently needs order and security" (p. 49).

Oh, yes, as regards order and security for the exploiters and corn speculators who are hiding their surpluses, or trying to wreck the corn monopoly laws, and are reducing the urban population to sheer famine, it is, of course, only meet and proper that Kautsky, the Marxist and Socialist, should sigh and shed tears. "We are all Socialists and Marxists and

Internationalists," sing the Kautskys, the Heinrich Webers, the Longuets, the MacDonalds, etc., in a chorus, "we all are in favour of a working class revolution, only we should like it not to disturb the order and security of the corn speculators." And this dirty subserviency to the capitalists is masked by a "Marxist" reference to the "process of production"! If this be Marxism, what is flunkeyism before the bourgeoisie?

Observe what our theoretician has arrived at. He accuses the Bolsheviks of palming off the dictatorship of the peasantry as the dictatorship of the proletariat, but at the same time he accuses us of introducing civil war into the villages (which we regard as our merit) and of despatching armed detachments into the villages, who publicly proclaim the dictatorship of the *proletariat* and the *poorer* peasantry, assist the latter and take away from the speculating richer peasants the surplus corn which they hide in contravention of the corn monopoly law!

On the one hand, our Marxist theoretician is in favour of pure democracy, in favour of the subordination of the revolutionary class, the leader of all who toil and are exploited, to the majority of the population (including, therefore, the exploiters). On the other hand, he insists, as *against* ourselves, upon the inevitableness of the bourgeois character of the revolution—bourgeois because the peasantry as a whole is still in the grip of bourgeois social relations—and yet pretends to defend the proletarian, the class and Marxist point of view! Instead of an "economic analysis," we have a first-class

olla podrida. Marxism is replaced by all sorts of fragments of Liberal doctrines, and by a propaganda in favour of flunkey-like subserviency to the bourgeoisie and the village vultures.

The question so hopelessly muddled up by Kautsky was elucidated by the Bolsheviks so far back as 1905. Yes, our revolution is a bourgeois revolution so long as we go hand in hand with the peasantry as a whole. We were fully aware of this, had repeated it a thousand times from 1905 onwards, and never attempted either to skip over this necessary stage of the historical process or to "abolish" it by decrees. Kautsky's endeavours to convict us on this point has in fact convicted his own confusion of mind and his own fear to recall what he wrote in 1905, when he was not yet a turncoat.

But in 1917, from April onwards, and long before the November revolution, that is, long before we assumed power, we said and explained publicly to the people: The revolution would no longer be able to stop at this stage, as the country had gone beyond that, as capitalism had advanced and as ruin had attained such gigantic dimensions as to demand, whether one wanted it or not, a further advance towards Socialism. For there was no other way of advancing, of saving the country, worn out by the war, and of relieving the sufferings of the workers and the exploited. It turned out just as we had predicted. The course of the revolution bore out the truth of our arguments. *First* there was a movement, in conjunction with the entire

peasantry, against the monarchy, against the landlords, against mediævalism, and to that extent the revolution remained a bourgeois, a bourgeois-democratic one. Then it became a movement, in conjunction with the poorest peasantry, with the semi-proletariat, with all the exploited, against Capitalism, including the village rich, the village vultures and speculators, and to that extent the revolution became a Socialist one. To attempt to put artificially a Chinese wall between the two stages, and to separate them by any other factor than the degree of the preparedness of the proletariat and of its unity with the village poor, means completely to pervert and to vulgarise Marxism and to replace it by Liberalism. It means to smuggle through a reactionary defence of the bourgeoisie against the Socialist proletariat under the cloak of quasi-learned references to the progressive character of the bourgeoisie as compared with mediævalism.

It is just because the Soviets, by uniting and drawing into political life the masses of workers and peasants, constitute the most sensitive and nearest to the people (in the sense in which Marx spoke in 1871 of a really *popular* revolution) index of the growth and development of the political maturity and class-consciousness of the masses, that they represent an immeasurably higher form and type of democracy. The Soviet constitution was not drawn up "according to plan." It was not drawn up in a study, and was not imposed upon the labouring masses by bourgeois lawyers. No, this constitution grew up in the course of the develop-

ment of the class-struggle in proportion as the class antagonisms were becoming more intensive. This is borne out by those very facts which Kautsky himself has to admit. At first the Soviets represented the peasantry as a whole, and the result was that the mental backwardness of the poorer peasants placed the leadership in the hands of the village vultures, of the prosperous peasants, of the petty bourgeois intellectuals. This was the period of the predominance of the petty bourgeois Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, whom only fools or turncoats like Kautsky could regard as Socialists. This petty bourgeoisie necessarily, inevitably, wavered and hesitated between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (Kerensky, Kornilov, Savinkov), and the dictatorship of the proletariat; since the petty bourgeoisie, in virtue of its fundamental traits of character and its economic position, is incapable of any independent policy. It may be observed in passing that Kautsky entirely runs away from Marxism by employing, in his analysis of the Russian revolution, the legal and formalist conception (useful to the bourgeoisie as a screen for its domination over, and as a means of deceiving, the masses) of "Democracy," forgetting that "Democracy" means, in practice, sometimes the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and sometimes the impotent reformism of the petty bourgeoisie subject to that dictatorship, etc. According to Kautsky, then, there were in our capitalist country bourgeois parties, and there was a proletarian party backed by the majority of the proletariat, but there were no *petty*

bourgeois parties, that is, the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries had no class roots, no petty bourgeois origins!

The hesitations and oscillations of the petty bourgeois Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries enlightened the masses and drove the overwhelming majority of them, all the "lower depths," the proletarians and semi-proletarians, away from such "leaders." Finally, the Bolsheviks obtained a majority on the Soviets (by November, 1917, so far as Petrograd and Moscow were concerned), while among the Social-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks the scissions became more pronounced.

The victorious Bolshevik revolution meant the end of all hesitations and the complete destruction of the monarchy and landlordism (which had still been in existence till the November revolution). The *bourgeois* revolution was carried out by us to *the end*. The peasantry *as a whole* was supporting us, since its antagonism to the Socialist proletariat could not break out at once. The Soviets included at the time the peasantry as *a whole*, the class divisions among the latter being still in embryo, still latent.

The process of ripening took place in the summer and autumn of 1918. The Czecho-Slovak counter-revolutionary mutiny aroused the village vultures, and the wave of well-to-do peasant insurrections passed over the entire territory of Russia. The poorest peasantry was learning from *life* itself, and not from books or newspapers, the fact of the antagonism of its interests to those of the vultures

and the village bourgeoisie in general. Like every other petty bourgeois party, the so-called Left Social-Revolutionaries were reflecting the hesitations of the masses, and in the summer of 1918 split into two. One section made common cause with the Czecho-Slovaks (insurrection in Moscow, when Proshyan, having seized the telegraph office for one hour, was informing Russia of the overthrow of the Bolsheviks; then the treachery of Muraviov, commander of the army against the Czecho-Slovaks, etc.), while another section, the one mentioned above, remained with the Bolsheviks.

The intensification of food distress in the towns was rendering the question about the corn monopoly more and more acute (Kautsky, the theoretician, has, in his "economic analysis," which is a mere repetition of platitudes gleaned from Maslov's writings of ten years previously, quite forgotten about this monopoly). The old landlords' and capitalists' State, and even the democratic and republican one, had been sending into the villages armed detachments, who were practically at the disposal of the capitalists. Mr. Kautsky knows, of course, nothing about it. He does not see in it the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. God forbid! That is "pure democracy," especially if it is approved by a bourgeois parliament. Nor does Kautsky know or speak about the fact that in the summer and the autumn of 1917, Avksentiev and S. Maslov, in company with Kerensky, Tseretelli and other Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, were arresting the members of the land-committees. The truth is that a bourgeois

State, which embodies and exercises the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie through a democratic republic, cannot confess to the people that it serves the interest of the bourgeoisie; it cannot tell them the plain truth, and is compelled to be hypocritical. But a State of the Commune or Soviet type tells the people the truth, proclaiming plainly and openly, that it is the dictatorship of the proletariat and of the poorer peasantry, thereby, by that very truth, rallying to itself scores of millions of new citizens, who are of no account under any democratic republic, but who are now drawn by the Soviets into political life, into *democracy*, into the administration of the State. The Soviet Republic sends into the villages detachments of armed workers (in the first place the most advanced) from the capitals, who carry Socialism into the country-side, rally to their side the poorer elements, organise and enlighten them, and help them to *suppress the resistance of the bourgeoisie*.

All acquainted with the conditions, who have been to the villages, declare that it was not until the summer and autumn of 1918, that our country-side passed through its *November* (that is, proletarian) revolution. The crisis is now passing. The wave of well-to-do peasant insurrections has given place to the rising of the poor and to the growth of the committees of the poor. In the army, too, the number of Commissaries and officers and commanders of divisions and armies recruited from the ranks of the working-class, is steadily growing. At the very time when Kautsky, frightened by the July, (1918) crisis, and the lamentations of the bourgeoisie was hasten-

ing to the latter's assistance, and was writing a pamphlet inspired by the conviction that the Bolsheviks were on the eve of their overthrow by the peasantry; at the very time when Kautsky saw in the desertion of the Left-Social Revolutionaries the "contraction" (p. 37) of the circle of those who support the Bolsheviks—at that very time, the *real* circle of the supporters of Bolshevism was extending immeasurably, as *millions and millions* of the village poor were freeing themselves from the tutelage of the village vultures and the village bourgeoisie, and were waking up to an independent political life. We, indeed, have lost hundreds of Left Social-Revolutionaries, hundreds of backboneless intellectuals, hundreds of village vultures, but we have gained millions of the poorer peasantry.* One year after the proletarian revolution in the capitals the turn came, under its influence and with its assistance, of the proletarian revolution in the country-side, which finally consolidated the power of the Soviets and Bolshevism, and finally proved that the latter had no longer to fear any hostile power in the interior. Thus, after completing the bourgeois-democratic revolution in alliance with the entire peasantry *as a whole*, the Russian proletariat has passed definitely to the socialist revolution, having succeeded in splitting up the village, in rallying to its side the village proletariat and semi-proletariat,

*The Sixth Congress of the Soviets, Nov. 7-9, 1918, was attended by 967 delegates with a decisive, and 351 delegates with a consultative, vote. The former included 950, and the latter 335 Bolsheviks, that is, about 97 per cent. of the total number of delegates.

and in uniting them against the exploiters and the bourgeoisie, including the peasant one.

If the Bolshevik proletariat in the capitals and large industrial centres had not been able to rally to its side the village poor against the peasant rich, this would have proved Russia's unripeness for the socialist revolution. The peasantry would then have remained an undivided whole, that is, under the economic, political, and moral leadership of the village vultures, of the rich and the bourgeoisie, and the revolution would not have passed beyond the bourgeois-democratic limits. (It must be said in parentheses that even so, it would not have meant that the proletariat ought not to have assumed power, since only the proletariat has really carried out the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the end, only the proletariat has made a serious contribution towards the advent of the world proletarian revolution, only the proletariat has created the Soviet State, which is, after the Commune, the next step in the direction of a Socialist State.)

On the other hand, if the Bolshevik proletariat had attempted at once, in November, 1917, without waiting or without being able to *prepare* and to carry through the class cleavage in the village, to *decree* a civil war or the establishment of Socialism in the villages, had attempted to do without the temporary union with the peasants as a whole, had attempted to do without the necessary concessions to the middle peasantry, it would have been a Blanquist distortion of Marxism, an attempt of the minority to impose its will upon the majority, a theoretical absurdity

and a display of ignorance of the fact that a *common* peasant revolution is still a bourgeois revolution, and could not in a backward country be turned into a Socialist one, *without a whole series of transitions and successive stages*.

Kautsky has confused *everything* in this most important theoretical and practical problem, and has, in practice, proved a mere servant of the bourgeoisie screaming against the dictatorship of the proletariat.

A similar, and perhaps even greater, confusion has been introduced by Kautsky into another most interesting and important question, namely: was the activity of the Soviet Republic in the field of agrarian reform—the most difficult and yet most important social reform—scientifically conceived and properly carried out? We should be thankful beyond words to every European Marxist who, after studying the most important facts, would critically examine our policy, because he would then help us immensely, and would also help the growing revolution throughout the world. But Kautsky, instead of a criticism, has produced a monstrous theoretical muddle which turns Marxism into Liberalism, and in practice, amounts to a series of idle, angry, vulgar sallies against the Bolsheviks. Let the reader judge for himself:—

"Landownership on a large scale could no longer be maintained, and the revolution had put an end to it. It became clear at once that it must be handed over to the peasant population." (This is not true, Mr. Kautsky. You substitute what is clear to *you* for the attitude of the different *classes* towards

the question. The history of the revolution has shown that the Coalition Government of the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries, was pursuing a policy of maintaining large ownership. This has in particular been proved by S. Maslov's law and by the arrests of the members of the land committees. Without the dictatorship of the proletariat, the peasant population would not have defeated the landlords who were allied with the capitalists.) ". . . But on the question as to the forms in which it should be carried out, there was no unity. Several solutions were possible. . ." (Kautsky is most of all concerned about "unity" among "Socialists," whoever these "Socialists" may be. That the main classes in capitalist society are bound to come to *different* decisions, is a thing which he forgets.) ". . . From a Socialist point of view, the most rational solution would have been to turn the large estates into State property and to allow the peasants who have hitherto been employed on them as hired labourers to cultivate them in the form of co-operative societies. But this decision assumes the existence of agricultural labourers such as Russia does not know. Another solution would have been the transfer of large estates to the State and their partition into small plots, to be rented out to peasants who had not sufficient land. Some fraction of Socialism would then have been realised. . . ."

Kautsky, as usual, operates by means of his famous "on-one-hand-on-the-other-hand." He places *side by side* different solutions, without reflecting

in the only realistic and Marxist way upon the kind of *transitions* that must take place from Capitalism to Communism in such and such conditions. There are in Russia agricultural labourers, but they are few, and the question raised by the Soviet Government as to the method of transition to a communal and co-operative land tillage has not been touched upon by Kautsky at all. The most curious thing, however, is that Kautsky sees a "fraction of Socialism" in the renting out of small land plots. In reality, this is a *petty bourgeois* solution, and Socialism has absolutely nothing to do with it. If the State renting out the land is not a State of the type of the Commune, but a parliamentary bourgeois republic, such as is constantly implied by Kautsky, the renting out of the land in plots would be a typical *Liberal reform.*

That the Soviet régime has abolished all private property in land is entirely ignored by Kautsky. He does even worse than that. He quotes the decrees of the Soviet authority in such a way as to omit the most important clauses, thus rendering himself guilty of a most incredible forgery. Having declared that "small producers aspire to full private property in the means of production," and that the Constituent Assembly would have been the "sole authority" capable of preventing the division of lands (an assertion which will cause laughter throughout Russia, where everybody knows that only the Soviets are regarded by the workers and peasants as authoritative institutions, while the Constituent Assembly has become a watchword of the

Czecho-Slovaks and the landlords), Kautsky continues: "One of the first decrees of the Soviet Government resolved that (1) all landlords' property in land is abolished immediately without compensation; (2) all landlords' estates, as well as all estates belonging to the Tsar's family, to monastic institutions, to the church, with all their live and dead stock, with all their buildngs and appurtenances, are placed under the control of the cantonal land committees and the district Soviets of peasants' delegates, pending the solution of the land question by the Constituent Assembly."

Having quoted these two clauses *only*, Kautsky concludes: "The reference to the Constituent Assembly has remained a dead letter. In point of fact, the peasants in the cantons were able to dispose of the land as they wanted" (p. 4).

Here you have an example of Kautsky's criticisms. Here you have a learned work which is uncommonly like a forgery. Kautsky suggests to the German reader that the Bolsheviks have capitulated to the peasantry on the question of private property in land, and that they have permitted the peasants to deal locally with the land as they wanted. But in reality the decree quoted by Kautsky (it was first promulgated publicly on November 7th, 1917), consisted not of two, but of *five* clauses, plus eight clauses of an Instruction which, it was expressly stated, "must serve for guidance." Now, in the third clause of the Decree it is stated that the farms are transferred to the *people*, and that an "exact inventory of the property" must be drawn

up and a "strict revolutionary watch over it" must be established. In its turn, the Instruction declares that "the right of private property in land is abolished for ever," that farms of high cultural development are "*not subject to division*," and that "the entire agricultural stock, live and dead, of the confiscated estates is placed at the disposal of the State or the Commune, according to their size and value, without compensation," and that "the entire land becomes a land reserve for the entire people."

Then, simultaneously with the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly on January 5th, 1918, the Third Congress of Soviets adopted a "Declaration of Rights of the Labouring and Exploited Masses," which now forms part of the Fundamental Statute of the Soviet Republic. Article 2, par. 1, of this Declaration proclaims that "private property in land is abolished," and that "model estates and farms are proclaimed national property." Hence, the reference to the Constituent Assembly did *not* remain a dead letter, as another national representative body, immeasurably more authoritative in the eyes of the peasants, undertook the solution of the agrarian question.

Again, on February 19th, 1918, we published the Land Socialisation Law, which once more confirmed the abolition of all land property and transferred the land and *all private stock* to the Soviet authorities *under the control of the Federal Soviet Government*. It also included, under the head of duties of the new authorities, "the development of collective farming as the more advantageous in re-

spect of economy of labour and produce, at the expense of individual farming, with a view to the transition to Socialist agricultural economy" (article 2, par. d). The same Law, in establishing the "*equalised*" form of land tenure, replied to the fundamental question as to who is to use the land, in the following manner: "Land plots for public and private needs, within the frontiers of the Russian Soviet Federal Republic, may be used: A. For cultural and educational purposes: (1) by the State as represented by the Federal, regional, provincial, cantonal, and village organs of Soviet authority, and (2) by public bodies (under the control, and with the consent, of the local Soviet authorities); B., for purposes of agriculture: (3) by agricultural communes, (4) by agricultural co-operative associations, (5) by village communities, (6) by individual families and persons" . . . .

The reader will perceive that Kautsky has completely distorted the facts, and has given the German reader an absolutely false view of the agrarian policy and legislation of the Russian proletarian State. Kautsky has not been able to formulate the most important questions with theoretical accuracy. These questions are: (1) the *equalisation* of the use of land; (2) nationalisation of the land (the importance of that or this measure from the point of view of Socialism in general, and of the transition from Capitalism to Communism in particular); and (3) public farming as a transition from individual farming on a small scale to Socialist farming on a large scale. In this latter case, the question arises

as to whether the treatment of the problem by the Soviet legislation satisfies the demands of Socialism.

On the first question it is necessary to bear in mind two fundamental facts: (a) The Bolsheviks, in examining the lessons of the revolution of 1905 (I may refer, for instance, to my own study of the agrarian question in the first Russian revolution), used to point out the democratic and progressive, and even revolutionary, value of the claim for "equalisation," and continued to do so in 1917 up to the time of the November revolution; (b) when adopting the Land Socialisation Law, the crux of which is just that same equalisation of land tenure, the Bolsheviks most explicitly declared that that idea was not theirs, that they were not agreed with such a claim, but regarded it as their duty to satisfy it, because it was the claim of the overwhelming majority of the peasantry. We said at the time that the ideas and demands of the majority of the labouring masses ought to be practically tested and discarded by *themselves*, that such demands could not be abolished or skipped over, and that the Bolsheviks would *help* the peasantry in that process of testing the petty bourgeois ideas, in order to *pass* from them as speedily and as painlessly as possible to the Socialist demands.

A Marxist theoretician, if he wanted to help the working-class revolution by his scientific analysis, ought to have found the necessary answer to the questions: (1) Is it true that the idea of equalised land tenure has a democratic and revolutionary value, that is, possesses the value of carrying

through the bourgeois democratic revolution to an end? And (2) did the Bolsheviks act correctly in carrying through by their votes (and by observing most loyally) the petty bourgeois law on equalisation?

Kautsky did not even see where, theoretically, the crux of the problem lay. He would never have been able to refute the view that the idea of "equalisation" has a progressive and revolutionary importance in a bourgeois democratic revolution, since such a revolution cannot go beyond it, and by doing so (the revolution having reached its limit) must necessarily demonstrate to the masses, at once and with perfect clearness and ease, the *inadequacy* of the bourgeois democratic solutions, and the necessity of proceeding beyond them towards Socialism.

Having overthrown Tsardom and militarism, the peasantry was dreaming about "equalised" land tenure, and no power on earth would have been able to kill this dream in the peasantry as it became free from landlordism and from the bourgeois parliamentary republican State. The proletarians were saying to the peasants: We shall help you to attain this "ideal" form of Capitalism (since equalisation of land tenure is the idealisation of Capitalism from the point of view of the small producer); but, by doing so, we shall demonstrate to you its inadequacy and the necessity of passing to the social tillage of the land.

It would have been interesting to see how Kautsky would have attempted to prove the fallacy of such

a direction of the peasant movement by the proletariat. But Kautsky preferred to avoid this question altogether. In addition, he directly deceived his German readers by withholding from them the fact that in its land law the Soviet authority has given a *direct preference* to communes and co-operative associations by putting them in the first place.

With the peasantry to the end of the *bourgeois* democratic revolution, and with the poorest, the proletarian and semi-proletarian section of the peasantry to the *Socialist* revolution—such has been the policy of the Bolsheviks, and such is the only Marxist policy. But Kautsky is at sixes and sevens, and cannot even formulate a single question correctly. On the one hand, he *dares not* say that the proletarians ought to have parted company with the peasantry on the question of equalisation, because he sees that such a rupture would have been absurd (especially when in 1905, when he was not yet a renegade, Kautsky explicitly advocated an alliance between the workers and peasants as one of the conditions of the victory of the revolution). On the other hand, he sympathetically quotes the Liberal platitudes of the Menshevik Maslov, who "argues" against the utopian and reactionary character of a petty bourgeois equality *from the point of view of Socialism*, and fails to point out the progressive and revolutionary character of the petty bourgeois struggle for equality and equalised land tenure from the point of view of a *bourgeois democratic revolution*.

Yet, mark you, Kautsky *insists* (in 1918) on the *bourgeois* character of the Russian revolution, and insists that we should not proceed further than the limit set by this character. At the same time he sees "something of Socialism" (for a bourgeois revolution) in the *petty bourgeois* reform of renting out small plots to the poor peasants (that is, in an approximation to equalised land tenure)! Make out what he means, if you can!

In addition, Kautsky displays a Philistine inability to take account of the real policy of this or that political party. He quotes the *phrases* of the Menshevik Maslov without any desire to see the *real* policy of the Menshevik party in 1917, when it practically advocated, in coalition with landlords and Cadets, a *Liberal agrarian reform* and compromise with the landlords (as proved by the arrests of members of the land committees and by Maslov's Land Bill). Kautsky has not perceived that Maslov's phrases about the reactionary and Utopian character of the petty bourgeois equality in practice constituted a screen for the Menshevik policy of an agreement between the peasants and the landlords (that is, of helping the landlords to deceive the peasants), instead of the revolutionary overthrow of the landlords by the peasants. What a wonderful Marxist this Kautsky is!

The Bolsheviks alone had drawn a distinct line of demarcation between the bourgeois-democratic and the Socialist revolution, and by carrying through the former to the end they opened the door for passing to the second. This was and is the only

revolutionary and the only Marxist policy, and Kautsky in vain repeats the old Liberal platitudes that "the small peasants have never and nowhere yet passed to collective production under the influence of theoretical arguments" (p. 15). How smart! But never as yet and nowhere have the small peasants of a large country been under the influence of a proletarian State! Never as yet and nowhere have the small peasants proceeded to engage in an open class struggle between the poor and the rich among them, to a civil war among them, with the propagandist, political, economic and military assistance of the poor by a proletarian State authority! Never as yet and nowhere has such an enrichment of speculators and profiteers taken place simultaneously with the utter ruin of the masses of the peasantry as the result of a war.

Kautsky is simply repeating and chewing the old cud, being afraid even to contemplate the new problems of proletarian dictatorship. What, for instance, if the peasants lack implements for small production, and the proletarian State helps them to obtain agricultural machinery for collective farming—what is it, dear Mr. Kautsky? A "theoretical argument"?

Or take the question of the nationalisation of the land. Our Populists, including all the Left Social Revolutionaries, deny that the measure we have passed constitutes the nationalisation of the land. They are theoretically wrong. In so far as we remain within the framework of commodity production and capitalism, the abolition of private pro-

perty in land constitutes simply land nationalisation, and the term "socialisation" only expresses a tendency, a desire, a preparation of the transition towards Socialism.

What, then, ought to be the attitude of Marxists towards the nationalisation of the land? Here, too, Kautsky is unable even theoretically to formulate the question, or, what is worse, deliberately avoids it; although it has long been known that Kautsky is well aware of the old controversies among Russian Marxists on the question of nationalisation, or municipalisation, or partition of the land. It is a direct mockery of Marxism when Kautsky asserts that the transfer of large estates to the State and their renting out to poor peasants would have realised some "fraction of Socialism." We have already said that there would be here no trace of Socialism. But this is not all. We should not even have here the *bourgeois democratic* revolution carried out to the end. It has been a great calamity for Kautsky that he has confided in the Mensheviks. Hence the curiosity of Kautsky's insisting upon the bourgeois character of our revolution and accusing the Bolsheviks of having conceived the idea of proceeding to Socialism, and yet himself proposing a *Liberal* reform in the guise of Socialism without carrying out this reform to the point of clearing away all the survivals of mediævalism in land tenure. In other words, instead of urging a *consistent* bourgeois democratic revolution, Kautsky, like his Menshevik advisers, is simply siding with the Liberal bourgeoisie which is afraid of the re-

volution. Indeed, why should only the large estates, and not all land, be turned into State property? By such a half-measure the Liberal bourgeoisie attains a maximum preservation of the old (that is, the least progress in revolution), and the maximum easiness of return to that old. It is only the *radical* bourgeoisie, that is, the one which wants to carry out the bourgeois democratic revolution to the end, that demands the *nationalisation* of the land.

Kautsky, who in the old days, some twenty years ago, wrote an excellent Marxist study of the agrarian question, could not but know Marx's references to the fact that land nationalisation is the most *consistent* demand of the bourgeoisie. Kautsky could not but know the controversy of Marx with Rodbertus, and the remarkable arguments of Marx in his "Theories of Surplus Value," where the revolutionary importance of land nationalisation from a bourgeois democratic point of view is set out with particular clearness. The Menshevik, P. Maslov, who has so disastrously been chosen by Kautsky as an adviser, used to deny that the Russian peasants would agree to the nationalisation of all (including peasants') lands. To an extent, this view of Maslov's might have been connected with his "original" theory (which was in reality but a repetition of the bourgeois critics of Marx), his repudiation of absolute rent and his recognition of the "law" (or "fact," as Maslov used to call it) of diminishing returns. In point of fact, however, already the revolution of 1905 had shown that the overwhelming majority of the peasants in Russia, both those who

were members of the village Commune and those who were not, were in favour of the nationalisation of the *entire* land. The revolution of 1917 confirmed this fact, and, after the assumption of power by the proletariat, realised it. The Bolsheviks remained faithful to Marxism in that they did not attempt (contrary to Kautsky's charges levelled at us without the least proofs) to "skip over" the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The Bolsheviks, first of all, assisted the most radical, most revolutionary, the nearest to the proletariat, champions of the peasants among the bourgeois-democratic ideologists, namely, the Left Social Revolutionaries, in carrying out what practically constituted the nationalisation of the land. Private property in land was abolished in Russia as from November 7th, 1917, that is, from the first day of the proletarian and Socialist revolution.

This act laid the foundation, the most perfect from the point of view of the development of Capitalism (without breaking with Marx, as Kautsky must admit), and at the same time created an agrarian order most elastic from the point of view of the transition to Socialism. From the bourgeois democratic point of view, the revolutionary peasantry in Russia could not proceed any further, since there can be nothing more "ideal," nothing more "radical," from that point of view, than the nationalisation of the land and the equalisation of land tenure. It was the Bolsheviks, only the Bolsheviks, who, thanks to the triumph of the proletarian revolution, assisted the peasantry in carrying through

the bourgeois democratic revolution to its uttermost limits. By this policy they contributed the utmost possible for the furtherance and the acceleration of the transition to a Socialist revolution.

One can judge by this what an incredible muddle Kautsky has offered to his readers by accusing the Bolsheviks of ignoring the bourgeois character of the revolution, and by himself betraying such a departure from Marxism that the nationalisation of the land completely disappears in his arguments, and the least revolutionary (even from the bourgeois point of view) Liberal agrarian reform is put forward as a "fraction of Socialism."

Here we are approaching the third question formulated above, namely, to what extent has the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia foreseen the necessity of passing to Socialist land tillage? Kautsky again has, in this connection, committed something like a forgery in that he quotes only the "theses" of one Bolshevik relating to the problem of transition to collective farming. Having quoted one of these theses, our theoretician triumphantly exclaims: "It is most unfortunate that a problem cannot be solved by merely being called a problem. Collective farming in Russia is so far condemned to remain on paper only. Never yet and nowhere have small peasants passed to collective production under the influence of mere theoretical arguments" (p. 50).

Never yet and nowhere has there been such a literary swindle as that to which Kautsky has now stooped. He quotes the "theses," but is silent about

the *law* issued by the Soviet authority. He speaks about "theoretical arguments," and is silent about the proletarian State authority which holds in its hands the factories and goods of all sorts. All that Kautsky, the Marxist, wrote in 1899 in his *Agrarian Question* about the means which the proletarian State possesses in order to effect a gradual passage of the small peasants to Socialism, has been forgotten by Kautsky, the renegade, in 1918.

Of course, a few hundred State-supported agricultural communes and Soviet farms (run at the expense of the State by associations of labourers formerly employed on large estates) are not sufficient; but can the ignoring of this fact be called a criticism? The nationalisation of the land, which has been carried out in Russia by the proletarian dictatorship, has guaranteed in the highest decree the carrying out of the bourgeois democratic revolution to its uttermost limits—even if a victory of the counter-revolution should turn back from land nationalisation to land division (as examined by me in a pamphlet on the agrarian programme of Marxists in the revolution of 1905). In addition, the nationalisation of the land has given the proletarian State the maximum opportunities for passing to Socialism in agriculture.

To sum up, Kautsky has put before us, from a theoretical point of view, a most horrid stew, in which the complete abjuration of Marxism forms the most distinct ingredient, and, in practice, a flunkeylike subserviency to the bourgeois and its reformism. A fine critic, no doubt!

His "economic analysis" of industry Kautsky begins with the following magnificent argument: Russia has a capitalist industry on a large scale. Can a Socialist system of production be built up on this foundation? "One might have thought so if Socialism meant that the workers of the various factories and mines should appropriate them in order to carry on independent production at each factory or mine. . . . Just to-day, on August 5th, when I am perusing these lines" (Kautsky adds), "Moscow reports a speech delivered by Lenin on August 2nd, in which he is stated to have declared: 'All the workers firmly hold the factories in their hands, and the peasants will not restore the land to the landlords.' The demand that the factories should belong to the workers, and the land to the peasants, was up till now an Anarcho-Syndicalist, not a Social-Democratic, demand." (pp. 52-53.)

I have quoted these arguments in full in order that the Russian workers, who formerly justly respected Kautsky, might judge for themselves of these methods of the deserter to the bourgeois camp. Only think: On August 5th, when numerous decrees about the nationalisation of factories in Russia had been issued, transferring all factories to the public ownership of the Republic and no single factory had been appropriated by the workers—on that August 5th Kautsky, on the strength of an obviously dishonest interpretation of a sentence in a speech of mine, was suggesting to the German readers that in Russia the factories were being handed over to individual workers! And after that Kautsky, at

great length, continues to chew the cud, repeating that the factories must not be handed over to single workers. This is not criticism, but the method of a lackey to the bourgeoisie, who is paid by it to libel the workers' revolution.

Again and again Kautsky writes that the factories must be handed over to the State, or to the municipalities, or to co-operative societies, and lastly adds: "In Russia they are now attempting to enter upon this path. . . ." Now, what does this mean? In August? Surely Kautsky could have commissioned one of his friends, Stein or Axelrod, or some other flunkey of the Russian bourgeoisie, to supply him with a translation of at least one of the decrees relating to factories?

"How far this process has gone, cannot yet be determined. This aspect of the activity of the Soviet Republic has at any rate a maximum interest for us, but it still remains entirely shrouded in darkness. There is no lack of decrees" (is that the reason why Kautsky ignores or hides the contents of those decrees from his readers?) "but reliable information as to their effects is practically non-existent. Socialist production is impossible without all-round, detailed, reliable, and rapidly informing statistics. But the Soviet Republic cannot possibly have created as yet such statistics. What we learn about its economic activities is highly contradictory and cannot be verified. This, too, is a result of the dictatorship, and the suppression of democracy. There is no freedom of the press or of speech." (p. 53.)

This is how history is written. No doubt Kautsky would have received from the "free" press of the capitalists and the Dutovites all the information about the factories which are being handed over to the workers. This learned savant, standing above classes, is really magnificent! Not one of the countless facts showing that factories are handed over to the Republic only, and that they are managed by the Supreme Economic Council, the organ of Soviet authority, which consists of delegates of the trade unions forming a majority, is touched upon by Kautsky. With the obstinacy of a bookworm, he goes on repeating one demand: Give me a peaceful democracy, without civil war, without a dictatorship, with good statistics (the Soviet Republic has created a statistical organisation, in which the best statistical authorities in Russia take part, but of course an ideal system of statistics cannot be got rapidly)—in a word, give me a revolution without revolution, without force, without raging battles! This is what Kautsky wants. It is the same as if one wanted to have strikes without passion on either side. Can you distinguish such a Socialist from the typical Liberal bureaucrat?

And so, relying upon such "facts," that is, deliberately ignoring with contempt numerous facts, Kautsky concludes: "It is doubtful whether the Russian proletariat has obtained under the Soviet Republic more, in the sense of real practical acquisitions and not of mere decrees, than it would have received under the Constituent Assembly, in which, as in the Soviets, the Socialists would have been

in a majority, although of a different school." (p. 58.)

A gem, is it not? We should advise the worshippers of Kautsky to circulate this sentence as widely as possible among the Russian workers, since no better material for gauging his political decadence could have been supplied by Kautsky himself. Kerensky, comrades and workers, was also a "Socialist," only of a different school! Kautsky, the historian, satisfied with the title which the Right Social-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks have appropriated, Kautsky, the historian, refuses even to hear about the facts which loudly proclaim that under Kerensky, the Mensheviks and the Right Social Revolutionaries were supporting the Imperialist policy and profiteering practices of the bourgeoisie, and discreetly suppresses the fact that it was just those heroes of the Imperialist war and bourgeois dictatorship who were represented in the Constituent Assembly by a majority. And this is called an "economic analysis!"

In conclusion, let me quote another sample of that "economic analysis": "After an existence of nine months the Soviet Republic, instead of spreading general well-being, has seen itself compelled to explain the causes of the general distress" (p. 41).

We are accustomed to hear such arguments from the lips of the Cadets. This, in fact, is the argument of all the flunkeys of the bourgeoisie in Russia. They all want to see a general well-being brought about in nine months after a ruinous war of four years, and under a sabotage and numerous

insurrections of the bourgeoisie, aided and abetted on all sides by foreign capitalists! There is absolutely no difference whatever between Kautsky and the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie so far as practice is concerned. His sweetly-reasonable arguments with the borrowed plumes of Socialism only repeat what is constantly said straightforwardly, without embellishments and without great refinement, by all the Kornilovites, the Dutovites, and Krasnovites in Russia.

* * *

The above lines were written on November 9th, 1918. In the night following news was received from Germany announcing the beginning of a victorious revolution, at first at Kiel and other northern towns and ports, where power had passed into the hands of Councils of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates, and then in Berlin, where the authority has also passed into the hands of the Soviet. The conclusion which I was going to write on Kautsky's pamphlet and on the proletarian revolution has thereby been rendered superfluous.

November 10th, 1918.

N. LENIN.

APPENDIX I.

THESES ON THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

(Reprinted from the *Pravda* of January 8th, 1918).

(1) The demand for the summoning of a Constituent Assembly formed in the past a perfectly legitimate part of the programme of the revolutionary Social-Democracy, because in a bourgeois republic the Constituent Assembly constitutes the highest form of democracy, and because the imperialist republic, with Kerensky at its head, in creating a parliament, was preparing an adulteration of the elections, accompanied by numerous infractions of democracy.

(2) While putting forward the demand for the summoning of a Constituent Assembly, the revolutionary Social-Democracy repeatedly, since the beginning of the revolution of 1917, emphasised its opinion that a republic of the Soviets is a higher form of democracy than the ordinary bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly.

(3) From the point of view of transition from the bourgeois to the Socialist order, from the point of view of the dictatorship of the proletariat, a republic of Soviets is not only a higher form or type of democratic institutions, as compared with the ordinary bourgeois republic crowned with a Constituent Assembly, but also the only form capable

of securing the most painless transition to Socialism.

(4) The convocation of a Constituent Assembly in our revolution on the basis of lists drawn up and promulgated at the end of October, 1917, is taking place in conditions which exclude the possibility of a faithful expression of the will of the people in general, and of the labouring masses in particular, by the elections of the Constituent Assembly.

(5) First, the proportional system of elections yields a faithful reflection of the will of the people only when the party lists correspond to the real division of the people in actual accordance with those party groupings which are reflected in those lists. But with us, as is well known, the party which between May and October had the largest number of adherents among the people, and especially among the peasantry, that is the party of Social Revolutionaries, presented united lists for the Constituent Assembly at the end of October, 1917, but split into two after the elections to, but before the meeting of the Constituent Assembly; hence there is not, and could not be, even any formal correspondence between the will of the majority of the electors and the composition of the Constituent Assembly.

(6) Second, a still more important, not formal nor legal, but social and economic source of the discrepancy between the will of the people and, especially, of the labouring class, on the one hand, and the composition of the Constituent Assembly, on the other, is the circumstance that the elections to the

Constituent Assembly took place at a time when the overwhelming majority of the people could not yet know the whole extent and significance of the Soviet proletarian and peasants' revolution, which began on November 7th, 1917, that is, *after* the promulgation of the lists of candidates for the Constituent Assembly.

(7) The November revolution, which has handed over authority to the Soviets, and which has wrested the political predominance from the hands of the bourgeoisie and transferred it into the hands of the proletariat and poorer peasantry, is passing under our eyes through successive stages of development.

(8) It began with the victory of November 6-7th, in the capital, when the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, the advance guard of the proletarians and of, politically, the most active section of the peasantry, yielded a majority for the party of the Bolsheviks and placed it at the helm.

(9) Then, in the course of November and December, the revolution was taking hold of the entire army and the peasantry, manifesting itself, first of all, in the dismissal and re-election of the old organisation at the top (army committees, provincial and peasant committees, the Central Executive Committee of the All-Russian Council of Peasants' Delegates, etc.), which embodied the obsolete, compromising stage of the revolution, not the proletarian stage, and which were bound to disappear under the pressure of the lower and broader popular masses.

(10) This mighty movement of the exploited masses for the reorganisation of the leading organs

of their organisations is even now, at the end of December, 1917, not yet at an end, and the Railwaymen's Congress, which still continues, constitutes one of its stages.

(11) Hence, the grouping of the class forces in Russia in the course of their class struggle is taking an essentially different shape in November and December, 1917, from the one reflected in the party lists of candidates to the Constituent Assembly towards the end of October, 1917.

(12) Recent events in the Ukraine, partly also in Finland and White Russia, as well as in the Caucasus, similarly revealed a regrouping of the class forces, which is taking place in the course of the struggle between the bourgeois nationalism of the Ukrainian Rada, the Finnish Diet, etc., on the one hand, and the Soviet authority, the proletarian and peasant revolution in each of these national republics, on the other.

(13) Lastly, the civil war which the counter-revolutionary rebellion of the Kaledinites has started against the Soviet authority, against the workers' and peasants' revolution, has finally brought the class struggle to an issue and has destroyed all chances of settling in a formal democratic way the acute problems raised by history before the peoples of Russia, and more particularly before the Russian working-class and peasantry.

(14) Only a complete victory of the workers and peasants over the bourgeois and landlord rebellion (as illustrated by the movement of the Cadets and Kaledinites), only a ruthless military suppression of

these revolting slave-owners can practically safeguard the proletarian and peasant revolution. The course of events and the development of the class struggle in the revolution has brought about such a condition of affairs that the slogan "All power to the Constituent Assembly," which takes no account of the conquests of the workers' and peasants' revolution or of the Soviet authority, and of the decision of the Second All-Russia Congress of Peasant Delegates, etc., has in practice become the slogan of the Cadets and Kaledinites, and of their myrmidons. It is becoming clear to the entire people that this slogan practically proclaims a war for the overthrow of the Soviet authority, and that the Constituent Assembly, if it parted company with the Soviet authority, would inevitably be condemned to political death.

(15) Among the most urgent problems of our people's life is the problem of peace. The real revolutionary struggle for peace began in Russia only after the victory of the revolution on November 6th, and the first fruits of this victory were the publication of the secret treaties, the conclusion of an armistice, and the beginning of public negotiations for a general peace, without annexations or indemnities. Only now the wide popular masses have a chance to witness the policy of a revolutionary struggle for peace, and to study its results. At the time of the elections to the Constituent Assembly the popular masses were deprived of such a chance. Hence, from this point of view also, the discrepancy between the position of the Constituent

Assembly and the real will of the people on the question of terminating the war is also inevitable.

(16) The combination of the circumstances set out above has for its result the fact that the Constituent Assembly, elected according to party lists previous to the proletarian and peasant revolution under the domination of the bourgeoisie, must inevitably conflict with the will and interests of the labouring and exploited masses who on November 7th began the Socialist revolution against the bourgeoisie. Naturally, the interests of this revolution stand above the formal rights of the Constituent Assembly, even if those formal rights had not been undermined by the absence in the law relating to the Constituent Assembly of a provision giving the people the right to recall and to re-elect its deputies at any moment.

(17) All attempts, direct or indirect, to view the question of the Constituent Assembly from the formal point of view of law, from the point of view of ordinary bourgeois democracy, without reference to the class struggle and civil war, constitute a betrayal of the proletarian cause and a desertion to the bourgeois camp. It is the absolute duty of revolutionary Social-Democrats to warn all and everybody against this error, to which a few Bolshevik leaders have succumbed, who have not been able to realise the significance of the November rebellion and the problems of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

(18) The only chance for the painless solution of the conflict which has been brought about by the

discrepancy between the elections to the Constituent Assembly and the will of the people, as well as the interests of the labouring and exploited classes, is the earliest possible grant to the people of an extensive right to re-elect the members of the Constituent Assembly, the adhesion of the Constituent Assembly itself to the law of the Central Executive Committee relating to these re-elections, the unreserved recognition by the Constituent Assembly of the authority of the Soviets, of the Soviet revolution, and of its policy on the land question and on workers' control, and its unqualified support of the enemies of the Kaledinite and Cadet counter-revolution.

(19) Outside these conditions the conflict with the Constituent Assembly can only be settled in a revolutionary way, by energetic, rapid, resolute and firm revolutionary measures on the part of the Soviet authority against the above-mentioned counter-revolution, by whatever slogans and institutions (including membership of the Constituent Assembly) this counter-revolution may screen itself. All attempts to hinder the Soviet authority in this fight would be tantamount to aiding and abetting the counter-revolution.

APPENDIX II.

VANDERVELDE'S NEW BOOK ON THE STATE.

It was not until I finished reading Kautsky's book that I had occasion to see Vandervelde's book, *Socialism versus the State* (Paris, 1918). A comparison of the two books suggests itself automatically. Kautsky was the theoretical leader of the Second International (1899-1914), while Vandervelde, in his capacity as President of the International Socialist Bureau, was its formal representative. The two represent the utter bankruptcy of the Second International, and both of them, with the skill of experienced journalists, artfully hide this bankruptcy, and their own collapse and desertion to the bourgeoisie, under Marxist shibboleths. The one is typical for German Opportunism, ponderous, academic, grossly adulterating Marxism by cutting away from it all that is unacceptable to the bourgeoisie. The other is typical for the Latin—one may even say for the Western European—variety of prevailing opportunism, which is more flexible, less ponderous, and adulterates Marxism by a similar method, but in a more refined manner. Both fundamentally distort the teachings of Marx on the State and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, Vandervelde dwelling more on the State and Kautsky on the Dictatorship. Both are at pains to obscure the very close, almost inseparable connection

between the two subjects. Both of them are revolutionaries and Marxists in words, but both are renegades in practice, bending all their energies in order to get away from the revolution. In neither of them do we find even a trace of what pervades all the works of Marx and Engels, and of what distinguishes Socialism from the bourgeois caricature of it, namely, the elucidation of the problems of revolution, as distinguished from those of reform, the elucidation of revolutionary tactics, as distinguished from reformist, and the elucidation of the rôle of the proletariat of the Great Powers in sharing with the bourgeoisie to a fractional extent the latter's surplus value and surplus booty.

Let us quote a few most characteristic arguments of Vandervelde in support of his criticism. Like Kautsky, Vandervelde quotes Marx and Engels very copiously, and, like Kautsky, quotes from them everything except what is disagreeable to the bourgeoisie and what distinguishes a revolutionary from a reformist. He has got plenty to say about the conquest of political power by the proletariat, since practice has long ago enclosed it within strictly parliamentary limits. But you will look in vain for *any* mention of the fact that Marx and Engels, after the experience of the Commune, found it necessary to supplement the, in part, obsolete *Communist Manifesto* by an elucidation of the truth that the working class cannot simply get hold of the available State machine, but must *destroy* it. Vandervelde, as well as Kautsky, as if by agreement, keeps complete silence about what is most

essential in the *experience* of the proletarian revolution, and what distinguished it from bourgeois reforms.

Like Kautsky, Vandervelde also speaks about the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, in order to repudiate it. Kautsky has done it by means of gross falsifications, while Vandervelde does it in a more refined way. In one of his sections (section 4), dealing with the "conquest of political power by the proletariat," he devotes one of the sub-sections to the question of the "collective Dictatorship of the Proletariat," "quotes" Marx and Engels (but omits all references to the main point, namely, to the destruction of the old bourgeois democratic State machine), and concludes:

"In Socialist circles, the Socialist revolution is commonly conceived in the following manner: a new Commune, but this time victorious, not in one centre, but in all the main centres of the capitalist world. . . . This is an hypothesis, but one which has nothing intrinsically incredible about it, at a time when it is becoming patent to everybody that the post-war period will in many countries see unprecedented class conflicts and social convulsions. . . . But if the failure of the Commune of Paris, not to speak of the difficulties of the Russian revolution, proves anything at all, it is the impossibility of finishing with the capitalist order of society until the proletariat has been sufficiently prepared for taking proper advantage of the power which might fall into its hands by reason of certain circumstances" (p. 73).

And this is all we find on the main question! Such are the leaders and representatives of the Second International. In 1912 they subscribed the Basel Manifesto, in which they publicly speak about the connection of that very war which broke out in 1914 with the proletarian revolution, and actually threaten it; and when the war actually broke out, leading to a revolutionary situation, they, the Kautskys and Vanderveldes, at once began to make all attempts to get away from the revolution. A revolution after the Commune type, don't you see, is only "not an incredible hypothesis!" This is quite analogous to Kautsky's arguments about the possible rôle of the Soviets in Europe.

But this is just the argument of an ordinary intelligent *Liberal*, who will, no doubt, agree that a new Commune is "not improbable," that the Soviets have a great future before them, etc. The proletarian revolutionary differs from the Liberal in this, that he, as a theoretician, analyses the new State importance of the Commune and the Soviets. Vandervelde, on the other hand, is quite silent on all that has been said by Marx and Engels on the subject in their analyses of the experience of the Commune. As a practical politician, the Marxist ought to make it clear that only traitors to Socialism can refuse at present to discharge the duty of elucidating the necessity of a proletarian revolution (of the Commune, of the Soviet, or perhaps of some other type), of explaining the necessity of preparing for it, of propagating among the masses the idea of a revolution, of refuting the bourgeois democratic

prejudices against it, etc. But neither Kautsky nor Vandervelde does anything of the sort, because they themselves are traitors to Socialism, who only want to maintain among the workers the reputation of Socialists and Marxists.

Take the theoretical formulation of the question. The State, even in a democratic republic, is nothing less than a machine for the suppression of one class by another. Kautsky is familiar with the truth, accepts it, but avoids the fundamental question as to what class and for what reasons and by what means the proletariat ought to suppress, on having conquered, the proletarian State. Vandervelde, too, is familiar with and approves of the fundamental propositions of Marxism, which he even quotes (p. 72 of his book), but does not say a single word on the highly unpleasant (for the capitalists) subject of the *suppression of the resistance of the exploiters*. Both Vandervelde and Kautsky have avoided this unpleasant subject, and this is just where their apostasy lies.

Like Kautsky, Vandervelde is a past master in the art of employing eclecticism in the place of dialectics. "On the one hand," "on the other hand," and so forth. On the one hand, the State may be understood to mean "the nation as a whole" (see Littré's *Dictionary*, a learned piece of work, no doubt, as Vandervelde points out on p. 87); on the other hand, the State may be understood to mean the "Government" (ibid.). This learned platitude is quoted by Vandervelde with approval, side by side with the extracts from Marx!

The Marxist meaning of the State, Vandervelde tells us, differs from the ordinary. Hence "misunderstandings" are possible. "With Marx and Engels, the State is not a State in the particular sense of the word, not a State as an organ of guidance, as representative of the general interests of Society. It is a State as the embodiment of authority, as the organ of authority, as the instrument of domination of one class by another" (p. 75-76). It is not in this latter sense that Marx and Engels speak about the destruction of the State. "Propositions of too absolute a character would run the risk of being inexact. Between the capitalist State based upon the domination of one class only, and the proletarian State, which aims at the abolition of all classes, there are many stages of transition" (p. 156).

Here you have Vandervelde's style, which is slightly different from that of Kautsky, but, in essence, identical with it. The dialectical method repudiates absolute truths, being engaged in the elucidation of the succession of opposites and the importance of crises in history. The eclectic does not want propositions which are "too absolute," in order to be able to forward his philistine desire to replace the revolution by "stages of transition." That the transition stage between the State as an organ of domination of the capitalist class, and the State as an organ of domination of the proletariat, is just the *revolution*, which consists in the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, and in the destruction, the breaking up of its State machine, is, of course,

suppressed by the Kautskys and the Vanderveldes in silence. They are just as anxious to suppress the fact that the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie must make room for the dictatorship of *one* class, the proletariat, and that, after the "transition stages" of the revolution will follow the "transition stages" of the general withering away of the proletarian State.

This is just where their political apostasy lies. This is just, from a theoretical or philosophical point of view, where they substitute eclecticism and sophistry for dialectics. The latter is concrete and revolutionary, and distinguishes between the "transition" from the dictatorship of one class to the dictatorship of another, from the "transition" of the democratic proletarian State to the non-State ("the withering away of the State"). The eclecticism and sophistry of the Kautskys and the Vanderveldes, on the other hand, tries to please the bourgeoisie by blurring all that is concrete and precise in the class struggle, and by substituting in their place the general idea of "transition" under which they can hide (*nine-tenths* of the official Social-Democrats of our time *do* hide) their repudiation of the revolution.

Vandervelde, as an eclecticist and sophist, is more skilful and more refined than Kautsky, since the phrase: "transition from the State in the narrow sense of the word, to the State in the broad sense of the word," can be made to hush up all questions of revolution, all differences between revolution and reform, and even the difference be-

tween the Marxist and the Liberal. For what European bourgeois will think of denying "in general" "transition stages" in such a "general" sense?

Vandervelde declares that he agrees with Jules Guesde in that it is impossible to socialise the means of production and exchange without the previous fulfilment of the following two conditions: "(1) *The transformation of the present State as organ of domination of one class over another, into what Anton Menger calls a popular Labour State, through the conquest of political power by the proletariat;* (2) *separation of the State as an organ of authority from the State as an organ of guidance, or, to use the expression of Saint Simon, of the administration of persons from the administration of things*" (p. 89).

This is written by Vandervelde in italics, in order to underline the importance of these propositions. But this is the purest eclectical *olla podrida*, a complete rupture with Marxism! The so-called "Popular Labour State" is but a paraphrase of the "Free People's State," with which the German Social-Democrats paraded in the 'seventies, and which Engels denounced as an absurdity. The "Popular Labour State" is a phrase worthy of the petty bourgeois democrat (after the manner of our own Left Social-Revolutionaries), a phrase which replaces class conceptions by *extra-class* ones. Vandervelde puts side by side the conquest of State power by the *proletariat*, that is, by *one class*, and "popular" State, without noticing the resulting

muddle. Kautsky, with his "pure democracy," arrives at the same confusion, at the same anti-revolutionary, philistine disregard of the problems of the class revolution, of the *class* (the proletarian) dictatorship, of the *class* (the proletarian) State.

Further, the administration of persons will only disappear and make room for the administration of things, when all States have disappeared. By means of this comparatively distant future Vandervelde walls up, or pushes to the background, the problem of *to-morrow*, namely, the *overthrow* of the bourgeoisie. Such a method, again, is equivalent to subserviency to the Liberal bourgeoisie. The Liberal is perfectly willing to discuss things which will happen when there will be no need to administer persons. Why not indulge in such innocent dreams? But as to the suppression by the proletariat of the resistance of the bourgeoisie, which fights against being expropriated,—well, silence is golden, and serves the class interests of the bourgeoisie.

Socialism versus the State. This is Vandervelde's bow to the proletariat. It is not difficult to make a bow; every "democratic" politician can make a bow to his electors, and under the cover of such a bow we can smuggle through an anti-revolutionary and anti-proletarian cargo.

Vandervelde quotes copiously the Russian Ostrogorsky to show what an amount of deceit, brutal force, corruption, mendacity, hypocrisy, and oppression of the poor is hidden under the civilised, polished, and perfumed exterior of modern bour-

geois democracy; but he draws no conclusion therefrom. He does not notice that bourgeois democracy suppresses and oppresses the labouring and exploited masses, and that, in its turn, *proletarian* democracy will have to suppress the *bourgeoisie*. Kautsky and Vandervelde are completely blind on this subject; for the class interest of the bourgeoisie, in the wake of which these petty bourgeois traitors are floundering, demands that this question should be avoided or passed over in silence, or that the necessity of such suppression be directly denied.

Petty bourgeois Eclecticism versus Marxism, Sophistry versus Dialectics, Philistine Reformism versus Proletarian Revolution—such ought to have been the title of Vandervelde's book..

THE UTOPIA PRESS, LTD. (T.U.), 44, Worship Street, E.C.2.

KU-559-555